PHILOSOPHICAL RHAPSODIES.

FRAGMENTS OF AKBUR OF BETLIS.

PHILOSOPHICAL

RHAPSODIES,

FRAGMENTS

OR

ARBOR OF BETULIS.

PHILOSOPHICAL RHAPSODIES.

FRAGMENTS

OF

AKBUR OF BETLIS.

CONTAINING

REFLECTIONS

ON THE

LAWS, MANNERS, CUSTOMS and RELIGIONS,

OF CERTAIN

ASIATIC, AFRIC, and EUROPEAN NATIONS.

COLLECTED AND NOW FIRST PUBLISHED.

By RICHARD JOSEPH SULIVAN, Esq.

Amicus Plato, amicus Socrates, sed magis amica Veritas.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Fragments were written by a native of Aſſyria, who, in very early youth, was removed to the continent of Europe, and thence to England. During his reſidence in England with a friend of his father's, he became inſtructed in its language, and in the principles of its religion. He then travelled; and in various countries threw together the reflections which appear in the following ſheets. The imperfections of ſtyle, and the want of method, obſervable in the arrangement of theſe Fragments, will require

quire a great degree of candour and indulgence in the reader. Akbur was a benevolent man and a Chriſtian; but he had not time or opportunity to erect himſelf into an author. With all his errors, however, there is ſtill ſomething novel and not unworthy of obſervation in his remarks; he never deſignedly miſleads: when he is wrong, he is ſo without being ſenſible of it himſelf. The reader will perceive that few references are made, though hiſtorical facts and conſequent deductions have here and there been borrowed: this muſt be attributed to the unſettled ſtate of life of the author. Conſtantly roaming from one country to another, it was impoſſible for him to have thoſe books and materials to turn to, which references conſtantly required; moreover, the familiar ſtyle of private communication did not admit of preciſion, or a dry appeal to authorities.

In

In a word, Akbur was a friend of his fellow creatures, and a zealous advocate for the offices of humanity; and, as ſuch, (now that he is no more) the editor, without any great degree of apprehenſion, uſhers his thoughts to the world, in their original, unadorned, and ſimple garb.

CORRIGENDA

FOR

VOLUME I. RHAPSODIES.

Page	80,	line	5,	for *Caſhmin*, read *Caſhmire*.
——	154,	——	17,	for *iniciating*, read *initiating*.
——	197,	——	10,	for *complection*, read *complexion*.
——	201,	——	12,	for *veſſalage*, read *vaſſalage*.
——	240,	——	5,	for *inſepected*, read *inſpected*.

PRELIMINARY FRAGMENT.

WE have already traverſed, together, many of the fields of practical and of ſpeculative knowledge. The ſame diſpoſitions, from our earlieſt days, have led us to the ſame purſuits. We have viewed the ways and the diverſities of man, as through the ſame optic. —You, indeed, with a diſcrimination which analized the minuteſt parts; — I with a careleſſneſs which hath bordered upon inattention. To whom, therefore, can I addreſs theſe thoughts with ſo much propriety as to you? — to you, who have been my friend and my fellow labourer; —who have guided me in the purſuit of

truth, and who have ſhewn me the ſureſt road to the acquiſition of that tranquillity, which alone can conſtitute our happineſs.

The ſubject I have now undertaken to diſcuſs, and which you muſt pardon me for dedicating to you, contains a vaſt variety of matter. Human affairs have already gone through the moſt ſcrutinizing as well as the moſt eloquent inveſtigations. It cannot, then, appear but as preſumption, temerity, or poſſibly both, that one ſo inadequate to the taſk ſhould adventure to handle what hath ſo ably been diſcuſſed before. To apologize to you for ſuch an attempt, would, I own, be in ſome degree meritorious, and might be the means of mitigating that cenſure which I have too much reaſon to apprehend; but I am at a loſs what apology to make, or how to excuſe myſelf. The fact is, and I am not ignorant of it, — no reflections or ſentiments whatever ſhould be obtruded on a

ſubject of this nature, but ſuch as can diſplay an intrinſic ſtamp of novelty or genius. This is an irrefragable poſition; and the more grievous, as I have certain indications, that before we get to a concluſion, a lamentable deficiency of both the one and the other will be found in our preſent undertaking. One advantage, indeed, and that alone, of which I can have an idea, and which may poſſibly tend towards my pardon, is, that in my wanderings, I may by chance hit upon a few opinions, ſome drawn from ſtudy, and ſome from obſervation, which being placed on the level with my own ordinary capacity, may by that means be detailed in a more familiar manner than they have hitherto been by men who have written profeſſedly on the ſubject.

Reflections on laws, manners, cuſtoms, and religions, muſt unavoidably be dry. Mental travelling can never

be ſo pleaſant or ſo amuſing as that wherein the corporeal faculties have been principally engaged. The one we drawl over, in the yawning diſpoſition of inſipidity; whereas the other exhilarates, and keeps us up to the ſpur and ſpirit of the moment. Enlivened by the ſubject, with what unfeigned ſatisfaction do we not follow the kindly-diſpoſed traveller in every ſtep of his career! We attend him, as the companions of his inquiries. We fairly become partakers with him of every viciſſitude of pain and ſatisfaction which he meets with in his journey.

While philoſophy thus goes hand in hand with the chearful ſpirit which ſedulouſly ſearcheth after information, nothing can be more amuſing; neither can any ſpecies of communication tend more to the improvement, or to the general advantage of mankind. To travellers like theſe, the tribute of our praiſe

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is unqueſtionably due; and we yield it, in the ſatisfaction we are happy to acknowledge we have received from their ſeveral performances. Animated deſcription, with anecdote interſperſed in lively language and good humour, is the moſt certain method of attracting admiration.

Convinced as I am of all theſe advantages, which the profeſſed traveller poſſeſſes who ſubmits his opinions to his friends, or to the world, it would be to me, you may be ſure, of infinite ſatisfaction, could I avail myſelf of aids which I ſhall ſo much ſtand in need of. But the nature of my deſign throws an inſuperable obſtacle in my way. Many of the countries which are to be the ſubject of our inquiries, it is true, I have viſited, and have reſided in ſome of them for years; but others I can only judge of from report. Propriety therefore requires that all, and each of them ſhould come under review, in a ſi-

milar mode of exhibition. Reflection will by such means be divested of prejudice, and investigation will at least have the chance of being as candid and correct as the materials we have to go upon, and our capacity of judgement will admit.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT I.

TO irradiate the mind with real and eſſential truth, its firſt operations, even while acquiring the rudiments of education, ſhould be turned to its own ſpecies indiſcriminately. — Man ſhould be ſtudied. —— How many windings and turnings! — How many abſurdities and contradictions are perceptible in his character! Proteus like, he eludes, unleſs carefully watched, the moſt prying eyes. The individual, and the many, ſhould be the firſt employment of the human intellect. This knowledge tolerably fixed, what may not eventually be expected? Other objects of the creation are at leiſure to be obſerved. At every ſtep we take, and in every ſtage of our exiſtence, we ſhall find food in abundance for ſpeculation.

lation. To view himſelf, then—to form a judgement of the relation he bears to other beings, and of the moral obligations which bind him to his ſpecies in general—theſe ſhould undoubtedly be the firſt conſideration of him who is to adhere to the practice, more than to the theory of philoſophy. Next to theſe, the ties which link him to the ſociety in which he moves ſhould employ his thoughts, his immediate ſafety depending on a due attention to the relation in which he ſtands to his fellow citizens. But to be the true friend of mankind, and it is this I would inculcate, he ſhould firſt be made to conſider his ſpecies, as I have already ſaid, in the general point of view; this being the way, and the only way to expand the heart, and to make the mind ſpurn the idea, too carefully inſtilled in ſome countries, of a pre-eſtabliſhed diſtinction of kinds of the human race. Criminal, arrogant, unchriſtianlike pretenſion!——The uncharitable

charitable offspring of bigotry and ignorance. No imaginary barrier can or ſhould be ſuppoſed to ſubſiſt between the inhabitants of one country and the inhabitants of another. We all of us ſhould be conſidered as children of the ſame common father; and in humble, grateful imitation of him, we each ſhould endeavour, indiſcriminately, to manifeſt the kindeſt and moſt benevolent offices to the whole circle of our fellow creatures.

In hinting at this, the indiſpenſable diſcipline and duty, I muſt ſuppoſe, of a truly-enlightened man, how forcibly does the neceſſity appear that the mind ſhould be early freed from prejudice, and all illiberal aſſociations of ideas! Vices and virtues bear a near ſimilitude in all countries. If an intrepid, an informed, and a kind-hearted diſpoſition is looked upon by us as perfection in a character, the ſame is found to be the moſt eſtimable propenſity in the moſt

moſt diſtant corner of the globe. I will confeſs we all are preſumptuouſly apt, from the wiſeſt to the moſt ignorant, to form a ſtandard of opinion for the reſt of mankind; a ſtandard, ſpringing from the prejudices which we have ourſelves locally imbibed; for where is the man, who, not accuſtomed to reflection, but who looks upon certain tenets of his own country as infallible? Will not the ſkin-clad Samoide laugh at the voluptuous, ſilken-robed Aſiatic?—The greaſy, offenſive Hottentot, at the powdered, perfumed European? And whence all this? Comes it not from the want of ſpirit and information? Truſt, *truſt*, is the rock we ſplit upon. We take almoſt every opinion upon truſt. An unaccountable inanity of mind pervades the greateſt part of the human race. We talk of philanthropy, and we talk of conviction founded on the baſis of compariſon, but both are merely words —words, ſoothing and tickling to the ear, but unhappily ſwolen with emptineſs, and diſpoſſeſſed

diſpoſſeſſed of every beneficial meaning. Nor are nations denominated barbarous, thoſe alone who are thus infatuated and blind; many of the moſt civilized are in an equal, if not a more unpardonable degree of ſocial tranſgreſſion; becauſe they have the ready means of information.

But we will admit there are candid, rational lovers of their ſpecies, who burſt theſe unnatural ſhackles of error; who deſpiſe the arrogance of pretenſion, and who withhold belief from the doctrine which ſuppoſes perfection excluſively veſted in a peculiar tribe. Cuſtoms and manners may differ; but mankind they will hold intrinſically the ſame. They will acknowledge error; but they will at the ſame time confidently aſſert it not to be immutable. Some ſocieties, they will ſay, have evidently the ſtart of others; but their enlightening hath been owing to accidental cauſes. Theſe, in darkneſs, will

will in their turn have their day. Each muſt have a beginning, for none have yet been found, but who, right or wrong, have been for a time, inflexibly partial to that which hath been handed down to them by their fathers. Tenacity is congenial, and in an eſpecial manner, obſtinately ſo to young or diſtantly-ſituated communities; and therefore nothing ſo difficult, although perhaps pernicious in its duration, as to eradicate what hath been ſanctified by time, or by the religion of a country.

There are, however, certain general principles and regulations, for the conduct which mankind ſhould hold, that are univerſal, and muſt be always ſo, becauſe they are conformable to the wants and the neceſſities of man, and becauſe they are conformable to the invariable nature of things; but the relative ſituation of man is that which more immediately concerns

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us to underſtand. He who ſtudies him, therefore, as he is daily, as he is hourly to be ſtudied, and analizes his actions, will ſoon acquire a fund of that uſeful and eſſential knowledge, which being erected on the ſuffrage of all ages and all nations, will always be conformable to the views and to the actions of mankind. Particular modes, particular circumſtances may render the externals of things widely different; but the purſuit of the mind, with all its operations, will be found invariably the ſame. To inveſtigate, therefore, the variety of characters which obſervation and which hiſtory hands down to us, and which is preſented to our conſtant view, and carefully and diligently to ſearch into the cauſes which produce the effects that heretofore have, and evermore muſt continue to draw our admiration — this is the way to fix and to ſtrengthen the penetration of the mind, and ultimately to eſtabliſh that unprejudiced judge-

judgment, which ſhould be the aim of all who have an affection to their ſpecies, and who are deſirous of promoting the happineſs and the welfare of the human race.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT II.

SHALL I venture to ſay that no man, who is not profeſſionally bred, can have occaſion for an intimate knowledge of ſciences which are abſtruſe or ſpeculative? I will ſay it, and I think I can ſupport it: for nothing can be truer than the remark, that we are not placed here to attend to the motions of the ſtars, or to pin ourſelves to that phyſical knowledge which is of ſuch rare emergence, that one man may know another half his life, without being able to eſtimate his ſkill in hydroſtatics or aſtronomy. Let him have a general, not a particular acquaintance with them; but let the ſtrong bent of his mind be turned to what muſt be of infinitely more conſequence, moral and philoſophical inquiries. From ſtudies like theſe he is certain to reap every advantage. The principles of civil ſociety will by this means become known

known to him; the arts of legiſlation, with all its ſeveral forms of government, and the cauſes of thoſe ſeveral forms, will gradually unfold themſelves, with all the recommendations of ability and preciſion. The various diſpoſitions of his fellow creatures will unflatteringly be exhibited in all ſituations, in all climates, and in all countries. The vices, the follies, and the virtues of his ſpecies, will be candidly laid open to him; and thus, in contemplating the phenomena, if I may be allowed the expreſſion, of this ſublunary ſcene, he will be enabled to form a juſt and valuable eſtimate of the ſpring of thoſe advantages and diſadvantages, and of that ſuperiority which hath been claimed, and which hath apparently exiſted in certain nations.

> Too apt the mind or fancy is to rove
> Uncheck'd, and of her roving is no end;
> Till warn'd, or by experience taught, ſhe learn
> That not to know at large of things remote
> From uſe, obſcure or ſubtil; but to know
> That which before us lies in daily life
> Is the prime wiſdom. MILTON.

National

National pride, as I have curſorily noticed, is no partial failing; it is univerſal; it is met with in the moſt miſerable, as ſtrongly marked, as in the moſt affluent and luxurious; nor is it, in fact, without its uſes. Some evils, no doubt, attend it; but each of them muſt be conſidered ſeparately and conjointly, and with the ſame portion of allowance as ſome of the happieſt, and the moſt pernicious, diſpoſitions of the ſoul, which often burſt into Being from the ſame ſource, actuated upon by the occaſion of the moment.

'Tis Heaven each paſſion tends,
And different men directs to different ends.
Extremes in nature equal good produce;
Extremes in man concur to general uſe. POPE.

But do we know of any impulſive principle, which hath been a greater ſpur to the growth of merit, whether we conſider it nationally or individually, than the pride of which we are ſpeaking? Even

in the common walks of life, what propenſity ſo ſtrong or beneficial? ambition may operate with ſome, avarice may prevail with others; but ambition has its end in the accompliſhment, perhaps, of a ſingle object; and avarice, too ſelfiſh in its nature, can never appear as a cheriſher of that plant which is to bear the bloſſom of general utility. The ſame cannot be ſaid of pride.

Pride, which in ſome, like "an eagle builds among the ſtars," and, in others, "lark like, neſts upon the ground," will undoubtedly, under proper ſubordination, and turned to proper ends, frequently atchieve wonders. It is one of the moſt wholeſome ingredients in the human compoſition; and when it proceeds diſintereſtedly and from patriotic affection, is, probably, the moſt advantageous diſpoſition in ſociety.

And

And again, let me aſk, where is it not to be met with? In what corner of the globe are there not characters to be found, ſo formed by nature or education, as exultingly to erect their cheſts, in the conviction of either a real or an imaginary ſuperiority? and what is the injury that reſults from this importance? None. Be it applauded then. It muſt indiſputably be of ſervice. It will at leaſt urge individuals to diſcharge their duty as men and citizens, not only with alacrity but with ſatisfaction; and will ultimately teach them to reſpect thoſe of countries different from their own, who are actuated by motives of a ſimilar nature.

The cardinal virtues are not the produce of a particular or pre-deſtined ſoil. Senſe and ſincerity will be found diffuſed over the whole earth. This or that country may indeed poſſeſs them in a more ample extent than others; but no ſpot

can be pitched upon, however uncivilized and plunged in error, where truth does not exiſt, or where ſhe will not be attended to and embraced, if properly made known to her uninſtructed children.

The principle of pride and of national attachment which I thus inſiſt upon, has been, it muſt be confeſſed, the cauſe of numberleſs evils to mankind. It has inflamed the minds of the turbulent and ambitious; it has created rivalſhips which have engendered war, with all its dire concomitants; it has been the deſtruction of millions; and yet, how has it been poſſible to ſubſtitute a propenſity leſs calamitous! I will acknowledge it to have been the parent of infinite miſery; but how was that miſery to have been avoided?

In early ages, the general tranſactions and buſineſs of ſociety were carried on, and in a certain degree, flouriſhed, without

the advantages which are inſeparably annexed to a ſocial and permanent compact; and the ſame may be obſerved in ſome countries even at this day. But civilization in ſuch caſes, is ſtill in its infancy, and conſequently pride can be of little utility. It is not until property increaſes that the means of ſafety become multiplied, and a ſettled community gradually taking root, that the ſpirit of emulation gets abroad; that the claſhing of intereſts, glory or renown, urges to premeditated defence; and that thence follow jealouſy, injury, and revenge.

On the general review of things, indeed, it would ſeem that war and contention are as natural to man as to animals of an inferior claſs; that he cannot exiſt without them; and that ſtrife, which perhaps ariſes from a ſpecies of fatality, or from the depravity of a few, is the principal object of our attention; but for the

honour of our race, we will not allow this concluſion in its fulleſt extent. It would be too ſevere to admit, that the deſtruction of our fellow creatures, the mad deſire of victory and of conqueſt, are the pervading diſpoſitions of our ſouls; we may certainly account in a far different manner for the unhappy prevalency of diſcord.

The extravagancies of men have, in all ages, been found more alluring and contagious than the ſober exertions of moderation and reaſon: the conqueror, therefore, has ever been looked upon with wonder and admiration. The companions of his fortunes, the intereſted in his ſucceſſes, together with the vaſt herd, who greedily follow the firſt ſcent that is given to them; theſe, one and all, extol the prodigious creature; they hold him up to the adoration of his countrymen; they almoſt exalt him to a divinity. At length

ſome

ſome future hiſtorian, anxious for the hero's glory, or for the diſplay of his own abilities, celebrates with the flowers of rhetoric the achievements of the field. All the carnage of war he tenderly paſſes over; they are accidents unavoidable. Objects of infinitely more importance occupy his attention. Beſprinkling the glorious man with all the incenſe of panegyric, he decks out the buſineſs of war in the moſt bewitching and captivating garments. The trifling cries of nature, — the horrors of diſpaſſionate deſtruction; — theſe he kindly conceals from the knowledge of the weak-hearted: he only labours at the greatneſs of his ſubject; the goodneſs of it is of no conſideration. In a word, illuſion has reconciled the world to diſcord more than any innate depravity of our nature. Great writers have led us aſtray. So true is the ſaying of a ſenſible moraliſt, that if one man only were placed upon earth, he would be

made to fight againſt gods or devils,—or elſe againſt his own ſhadow. The peaceful and the amiable are not brilliant enough for record.

The ſubſtance of hiſtory in general is little elſe than a recapitulation of feuds and ſanguinary animoſities; of ſuch and ſuch men being born in ſuch and ſuch countries; of hoſtilities being commenced on ſuch and ſuch days; of thouſands being cut to pieces in this place, and tens of thouſands maſſacred in that: thus, from one page to another, ringing the bloody chime of murder and deſtruction!* But, unhappily and indelibly ſtained as the annals of mankind have been with narratives of this nature, let us, as indeed we may, from our own obſervation, conclude, that the fault is to be found in

* In 160 years, during the declenſion of the Roman empire, ſeventy perſons bore the imperial name of Cæſar.— What carnage!

hiſtory,

hiſtory, where the leſſer have been too frequently ſubſtituted for the more eſtimable traits of ſociety. And that there have been in all ages, — that there are ſtill, and that there ever will be, thoſe whoſe attention, happily turned from ſuch deſtructive ends, will always be given to the ſecurity and benefit of their fellow creatures; and who will with fervency cry out, "Happy are the people "whoſe kings have not been renowned "in ſtory!"

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT III.

IT has long been a diſputed point, and always will continue ſo, for it never can be cleared up, which was the firſt, and which the beſt-peopled country of this terraqueous globe. Moſt writers, I think, incline to the Eaſt, and apparently (do not accuſe me of prejudice) with good reaſon; for warm climates, where vegetation is quick, and where the neceſſaries of life may be eaſily procured, are ſurely not only the beſt adapted to immediate exiſtence, but are ſuch as muſt enable the inhabitants to provide for their families, with a ſatisfaction which cannot but lend a moſt material aſſiſtance to population. That this could not have been the caſe in northern regions, is evident. Much labour and unremitting induſtry were required under the preſſure of a cold and an ungenial atmoſ-

atmoſphere. Animals who fed on graſs, or preyed upon each other, were probably the aborigines of moſt parts of Europe; whereas the Eaſt, which hath always poured forth the moſt valuable treaſures, and in the greateſt abundance, muſt at all times have ſerved as an aſylum and a nurſery for the human ſpecies: and in fact we find from the earlieſt accounts, that the Eaſt was ever celebrated for its numerous inhabitants. But the inquiry, it muſt be confeſſed, is uſeleſs; ſuffice it, that the Eaſt, in all ages, has been conſidered as the richeſt and the moſt populous country in the world, and that it had produced the faireſt fruits of ſcience, at a time when the ſeeds were only thinly ſcattered, or barely taking root in the weſtern hemiſphere. The peopling of this earth, then, we will leave to thoſe fabricators of ſyſtems, who delight in uncommon exertions of the imagination, and who,

who, on hypothetical foundations, erect the ſtrangeſt and moſt whimſical edifices, —caſtles of air; curious, but untenable!

The diſtinct varieties of the human race are, however, much more worthy of attention; eſpecially as it is ſtill an undetermined point, whether there were originally different races of our ſpecies, or whether all men were of one race, according to our chriſtian-like belief. The account given us by Moſes of our firſt parents, is by ſome conſidered as allegorical, and by others as thoroughly orthodox; whilſt there are not wanting thoſe who contend that many pairs were originally created, and that the variety proceeds from climate, and climate only. Which is the moſt credible, cannot poſſibly be determined; much difficulty will, no doubt, occur in the ſupport of all and either of theſe opinions. Good and evil may certainly be typified by the names of the firſt inhabitants of Paradiſe. Providence

dence might have ordained us to have proceeded from one pair; or ſeveral pairs might have been created, as beſt ſhould ſeem to the glorious, the unerring Maker of the whole. Human underſtanding, however, will determine for itſelf; and without the ſmalleſt preſumption, or without meaning to attack religion, will very poſſibly conclude, "that apparently there could have been no neceſſity why we ſhould all have proceeded from one man and one woman, as it would appear moſt conſonant to the majeſty of God, to ſuppoſe, that each portion of the earth ſhould have had at its origin its own diſtinct inhabitants." But here a difficulty, not to be ſurmounted, will ſtart againſt the concluſion; for admitting, that as the divine word could, ſo it actually did breathe exiſtence into varieties of the human ſpecies at the creation.—How comes it—that ſo contrary to all the other parts of nature, where the means are ſo admirably ſuited to the end, that the diſſimilitude of configuration

tion and complection ſhould be ſo great, as it is obſerved to be in people living in the ſame climate, and very nearly treading on the ſame ſoil? Turn your eyes towards the Laplander and the man of Frieſland—ſee what a variety in the conformation of theſe beings—look again at the inhabitant of Abyſſinia, and the woolley-headed Coffre of Negroeland, what a diſtinction is there! and yet how little, how very little difference in the air they breathe.

Whichever ſide we lean to, difficulties of this nature will ever preſent themſelves. If we ſubſcribe to the belief of a firſt pair, and no more, the accounting for the diſtinctions which now exiſt, and which according to the natural courſe of things, muſt have proceeded from climate, (climate having no effect upon embryos) will puzzle the ſtouteſt theologian that ever upheld the doctrine. If we ſubſcribe

to the contrary opinion, the obſtacle of climate lies before us ſtill.

Naturaliſts maintain, that all animals, the human included, are poſſeſſed by Providence from their birth with certain properties ſuitable to their peculiar ſituation and condition: fur to quadrupeds in cold countries; hair in climates that are hot; ſtrong athletic limbs, and a large portion of blood to the man in temperate regions; with diminutive ſtature, and, to repel frigidity, an unctuous ſubſtance in the frame of the timid ſon of the Frozen Land. But, as I obſerved before, if this were really the caſe, how happens it that there is ſo palpable a variety in the forms, colours, diſpoſitions and propenſities of children of the ſame parent ſoil? The queſtion is not to be reſolved; at leaſt I muſt think ſo, if reaſon be admitted in ſuch bewildering diſquiſitions.

—We

—We were form'd then, ſay'ſt thou ? and the work
Of ſecondary hands, by taſk transferr'd
From Father to his Son ? ſtrange point and new !
Doctrine which we would know whence learn'd ; who ſaw
When this creation was ? remember'ſt thou
Thy making, while the maker gave thee being ?

PAR. LOST, B. 5, V. 855.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT IV.

A Little arbitrarily, but not without ingenuity, naturaliſts have claſſed the race of man in ſix diviſions. To begin with the polar regions: Here he is ſaid to be brown, ſhort, oddly ſhaped, and ſavage; the Tartar is repreſented olive coloured, middle ſized, ugly, and robuſt; the ſouthern Aſiatic,—of a dark olive tint, ſlender ſhape, ſtraight black hair and feeble; the negroe of Africk,—black, ſmooth ſkinned, wooly headed, and well ſhaped; the American,—copper coloured, with black hair, ſmall eyes, and ſlight limbs; the European and bordering nations,—white of different ſhades, with fine hair, large limbs, and much bodily vigour.

Theſe are the ſix claſſes in which we are placed; and here cloſe the diviſions; ſyſtematical enough, but erroneous and in-

complete. Before we get to the end of our ſubject, inſtances in proof will probably preſent themſelves; for the preſent, therefore, we will content ourſelves with a diſpoſition ſo regularly made.

Thus filed off in bodies, to uſe a military phraſe, mankind have been obſerved in ſome countries to diminiſh in numbers conſiderably, and in others to increaſe, but not at the ſame time, and in ſuch perfect ratio, that the increaſe of the one can poſſibly fill up the caſualties of the other. If we give credit to the calculations that have been made on this head, and which are ſuppoſed (I will not ſay how juſtly) to be tolerably exact; one tenth part of the people do not exiſt now that did in former days *. An aſtoniſhing decreaſe,

* It appears from the regiſters of England, that one half of the children born in Great Britain die under twelve years of age. Is this a natural evil? moſt probably it is not: the offspring of man is not ſurely more

creaſe, if true; but whence has it proceeded? Diſeaſe has not been more prevalent, wars have not been more deſolating, nor have any ſupernatural calamities afflicted us, ſince our ſubmerſion by the flood.

Some hidden defect, ſome latent poiſon, muſt work this alarming cataſtrophe. A lingering diſeaſe of this nature, a decay ſo ſerious in its progreſs, portends no permanency to mankind: ſhould it continue, adieu ye dreams, adieu ye phantaſies of exiſtence! No crimes, no monſtrous enormities, need bring on a ſecond deſtruction of ſuch miſerable flutterers of a day. The

fatally marked out than the offspring of animals of an inferior rank in nature; and that ſuch animals are not ſo liable as man to die young is evident. Are we not to look for it in the art that is uſed with infants? Brutes never bring up their young by proxy. Every creature, except the human, as has been well obſerved, is the nurſe of its own offspring, and they thrive accordingly; were it otherwiſe, the young of all animals would ſhare a ſimilar fate with thoſe of the young of the human ſpecies.

crowd preſſing on each other, will gradually quit the ſtage. The hour muſt come when the race will be extinct, when all ſhall be at an end.

The human ſpecies, however—and let us dwell on the ſubject while we are able—whether in a ſavage or a civilized ſtate, ſhews itſelf, in its offspring, every where alike: the form is the ſame. The capacity for receiving, by imitation, every neceſſary information, proves, that in the intellectual faculty, there is little difference. The arrangement and culture of the young ideas, therefore, and the ſociety into which we may be thrown, are the efficient cauſes on which we muſt reſt the ſuperiour exertion of every particular talent and virtuous diſpoſition. Properly ſpeaking, indeed, we ſhould ſtile ourſelves factitious, and not natural beings; creatures of art, formed by diſcipline and ſociety, into mere machines:

'Tis

'Tis education forms the common mind:
Juſt as the twig is bent, the tree's inclin'd. POPE.

Look at the ſavage, wild in the woods, and with him contraſt the man who is poliſhed by ſociety. What a difference! Not ſo much in externals; but, in their paſſions and inclinations, what a diſſimilitude! The happineſs of the one, you will find, requires nothing more than liberty, food, indolence, and repoſe; beyond theſe gratifications he has not a thought. The man of cultivated underſtanding, on the other hand, ſickens at the barbarous diſpoſitions of ſo ſenſeleſs a wretch; the felicity he delights in dwells in refinement; in the luxury of eaſe, and in ſenſual enjoyment; his mind, enlightened and penetrating, ſoars to the contemplation of this mighty maze, "a wild, where weeds and flowers promiſcuous ſhoot." He labours in the purſuit of ambition; or he modeſtly treads, with reſignation, the paths of morality and peace.

And yet the poſitive advantages which the one poſſeſſes over the other, are not perhaps ſo great as might be expected. Society entails anxiety and care; the unfettered ſtate, again, brings with it a total diſregard to thought or apprehenſion; to-morrow may provide for the wants which to-morrow may occaſion; but we will not give into the idea, that the rude ſtate of man can be equally gratifying and comfortable, with that which has been poliſhed by time and attention. A civilized community is certainly preferable to one that is uncultivated, although ſome extraordinary virtues may be ſeen to exiſt in the characters that form the latter; for candour, ſincerity, reſolution and perſeverance; paſſive and active courage, together with hoſpitality and good faith, are as frequently the ſtrongeſt marked traits in a refined ſociety as in a people denominated barbarous and wild.

With

With incontrovertible propenſities to ſociety, obſervable in every quarter of the univerſe, what infatuation is it in certain writers, paradoxically to conjecture, that man was ordained to roam a ſolitary being! If no other reaſon preſented itſelf, ſurely the ſuperior advantages which he derives from ſocial intercourſe would be alone ſufficient to prove, that he was deſtined to mix with his fellow creatures—Can the aſſociation of any other animals turn to the ſame account? No one, I fancy, will hazard the conjecture. Why then cannot the human ſpecies be ſuppoſed to follow that unerring principle of inſtinct, which is obſerved to regulate the conduct of every other animal of the creation? If the bird, the fiſh, and the beaſt of the field, follow invariably the law preſcribed to its immediate claſs, why ſhould we alone differ ſo greatly from the pre-determined order of Providence? Is man alone, man the firſt acknowledged of

created beings—is man alone to run counter to the ends for which he is declared to have been formed? If we had been deſtined from the beginning to ſtalk about melancholy and wretched wanderers through the woods, how came it that we ſo ſoon ſtarted from the law which had been preſcribed to us, and feeling the inconveniency of ſolitude, that we ſhould ſo univerſally have formed ourſelves into hordes and aſſociated bodies?

Moſt animals herd with each other, from the ſmalleſt inſect that flits around the pool, to the towering elephant that ranges through the foreſt. Of theſe, though evidently not calculated for ſociety, as is the human ſpecies, many will be found, it is true, to ſtraggle; but are we therefore to conclude, that becauſe they are ſometimes ſcattered, becauſe they are indiſcriminate in their connections, and becauſe they are unreſtrained by formal laws,

laws, that we ſhould by conſequence be doomed to a ſolitary and a more unſocial exiſtence than it is evident they are? What unaccountable hypotheſes! What extravagant chimæras!

The real diſpoſition of the human ſpecies hath been in all ages and in all countries alike. There has always been a natural ſympathy and attraction; the inſtinctive affection of the ſexes has principally ſerved to eſtabliſh the permanency of ſociety by the ties and the obligations it has occaſioned. Self love is predominant in all; our wives, our children, every object that contributes to our felicity, is dear to us. Man is fond of what he can call his own. In ſhort, if the propagation of the human race be a natural and inſtinctive paſſion; if the care of our offſpring in helpleſs childhood be not repugnant to the feelings of the parent; it then will follow, and raſh is he that will deny it,

that ſociety is, and muſt be, natural to man; and that eſtranged from each other, the human ſpecies never did nor ever can ſubſiſt.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT V.

WE have ſaid, that ſince mankind have had a ſituation appropriated to them in this world, there muſt have been ſome ſociety; not indeed that luxurious, that refined commixture, which modern times afford; but a ſociety wherein they lived in ſome degree dependent on the good offices of each other. That the accounts we have of what are called the firſt ages, do not preſent the ſtate of ſociety in thoſe days as in any reſpect deſireable, muſt be readily allowed. The apparent ſimplicity which then reigned, and which has ſince been ſo celebrated, was palpably barbarous and unenviable; it preſented nothing but what was rude and uncultivated; a little removed from the ſavage ſtate; and when the human mind firſt began, with all the eagerneſs of rapacity, to dwell on its own imme-

diate

diate intereſt. At that epoch, man will appear to have been covered with vice, hideous and deformed: moſt of the hiſtories of antient times now extant, ſhew that diſcord very early began to reign among us, and that bloodſhed and ſlaughter were known almoſt as ſoon as there were men*. How ſanguinary do we appear from even the ſacred records! Wild beaſts were not more furious where food or the fierceſt paſſions were concerned; blood guſhed in ſtreams from the effects of rage, and the unbridled deſires of brutal appetite. Victory then was the victory of monſters; no bounds were ſet to vengeance, which the mercileſs extirpation of each other alone could ſatisfy.

The firſt perceptions, however, the firſt rudiments of ſcience, began to ſhew them-

* And the Lord ſaid unto Cain, the firſt born, "Thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the "ground."

ſelves

ſelves in times like theſe. What are the moſt admired exertions of human ability, but improvements on what, in the earlieſt ages, had been but poorly underſtood? Shall we ſay, that ſhips and palaces, with a thouſand other efforts of human genius, have been the growth of modern days? The aſſertion would be prepoſterous; rafts, prows, and cottages, preceded what are now the objects of admiration. We have borrowed from thoſe who lived in a ſtate of rude and uncivilized nature. We have indeed improved; and by the continued acceſſion of new and more determinate ideas, have advanced conſiderably farther than they did in the intricate walks of ſcience; but we are indebted to them for the original deſigns.

The effects of what is called antient ſimplicity were long felt; ambition, ſuperſtition, luſt, and revenge, ruled uncontrolably the greateſt portion of mankind. The magiſtrates

magiſtrates lorded it with ſceptres of iron; the people groaned under the preſſure of the yoke. Prieſts in the ſervice of God, pillaged and fed on the laborious induſtry of the poor. Impediments ſuch as theſe could not but obſtruct the advancement of knowledge and ſcience. The day, however, broke, after years of ignorance and infatuation: men then ſaw their way, and the mind, ſtruggling for freedom, emancipated itſelf from that ſlavery in which it had continued ſhackled from the remoteſt periods of time.

In this manner contemplating the human diſpoſition, the nearer we go to the ſtate of nature, the more humiliating ſhall we appear as rational beings; the more enormous will be found the crimes which ſtain the character of our race. Society therefore, free, but wholeſomely regulated ſociety, is alone capable of embelliſhing and rendering us generally

and

and individually happy: it is the parent of ſafety, the beneficial ſpring of thoſe ſciences and arts which adorn and dignify man, and which render him, in the end, the merited poſſeſſor of the pre-eminence he claims.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT VI.

MAN was born to labour—the earth requires it. Were it not for the operations of both body and mind, the myriads of beings whom this globe contains would not find ſubſiſtence: the ſoil indeed poſſeſſes the principles of vegetative life, but care and cultivation muſt make it ſufficiently productive. Health and future eaſe require that we ſhould labour; for what dreadful diſeaſes, what frightful calamities afflict the human frame, where ſtagnate waters, marſhy fens, and uncleared woods, caſt forth their baneful exhalations—labour is therefore a neceſſary conſequence of our exiſtence. Moreover, the products of this world are in general ſo incomplete in their origin, and ſo ſcattered by the wiſe hand of Nature, that it ſhould ſeem as if, in the providential care of her children,

children, ſhe had reſolved that every man ſhould work on his own particular ſpot, and then, by intercourſe and traffic, to aſſiſt each other; ſo that a common intereſt, and a mutual attraction, ſhould be every where eſtabliſhed.

Radical dependencies like theſe, firſt laid the foundation of large communities; but previous to this, and to the ordination of any particular laws for uniting ſociety, a language muſt have been formed, and the force and meaning of it muſt have been generally underſtood.

Language is univerſal, and not confined to man: almoſt every animal, that comes within our obſervation, has ſome peculiar method by which he can render himſelf intelligible to his ſpecies by ſound. If at any time mankind were without language, the eyes muſt have been uſed as the organs of communicating thought. How forcibly,

how univerſally underſtood are thoſe features, by even the moſt ignorant and uncivilized. Range from one extremity of the earth to the other, the language of the eyes will be the language of every human being you ſhall meet; nay, ſo ſuperior will you find it to any, the moſt artificial, combination of words, (and here I reſt myſelf upon the evidence of my fair readers) that a look will be frequently more expreſſive and intelligible than the moſt eloquent and perſuaſive flow of ſpeech.

But as we have ſaid before, language is univerſal: whether there was a time when we could not articulate ſounds, and whether at a ſubſequent period, the moſt flexible organs, by accident, modulated ſounds into words, and theſe again came to be ſtudied by imitation,—whether ſuch was the fate of man, in any degenerate period of his exiſtence, I will not pretend to determine. Deep-thinking men muſt decide

cide upon ſuch points, apparently inexplicable; adverting, as they go along, to what the Rabbins ſupport, the exiſtence of the Hebrew dialect from the beginning of the world. Adam and Eve, they ſay, ſpoke it; the former even came from the hands of God, with innate ideas, and an innate acquaintance with the Jewiſh language*.

With us, however, who are neither miraculouſly informed, nor yet bold in our concluſions, the uſe of the tongue will undoubtedly be thought as old as that of any of the other members of our frame. The only records we have, ſupport us in ſuch a belief; the contrary opinion, which is held forth by ſome, is merely the reſult

* In a diſpute between the Phrygians and Egyptians relative to the antiquity of the two nations, Pſammetichus, king of Egypt, cauſed two new-born infants to be ſhut up with dumb nurſes; when they grew up they were heard, when hungry, to pronounce the word *bekkos*, which in the Phrygian dialect ſignified bread: this determined the point in favour of the Phrygians.

the reſult of ingenious ſpeculation, or of ignorance at beſt, engrafted on ſuperſtition.

While we admit (and it is impoſſible to do otherwiſe) this univerſality of ſpeech, how ſhall we be able to account for the varieties of language among the human race, eſpecially as we are told, that there was but one language when it was preſumptuouſly reſolved to build a tower in the land of Shinaar? The Lord, I know, it is ſaid, confounded this language on account of our temerity, and then ſcattered us abroad. This was to ſow the ſeeds of variety, no doubt; but are we to receive this account in the literal ſenſe in which it is given, or ſhall we venture to explain away the inconſiſtencies of it, as others have done before us? The diſcuſſion, I fancy, would lead us too far; it involves too much; let us think, therefore, as we pleaſe; but, as no good can reſult from the inquiry, let us be humble and ſilent.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT VII.

FROM the articulation of ſounds, to the communication of our thoughts by writing—that ſublime art!—the diſtance muſt have been great. Hieroglyphics and rude ſketches of drawings, were, no doubt, the rudiments of that extraordinary correſpondence which hath been ſince eſtabliſhed between intellectual minds. On imperfect eſſays ſuch as theſe, the mind muſt have dwelt a conſiderable length of time; hence gradually improving, the eſtabliſhed form that emblematically conveyed the ſenſe, at length ſucceeded to the crude repreſentation, which was but partially, perhaps individually underſtood, until a fixt and a ſimple character, ariſing from reflections on the conveniency of combination, ultimately produced an al-

phabet formed to expreſs and to convey to the uttermoſt parts of the earth, thoſe ſentiments of the heart which originally were confined to ſpeech, and to oral communication. That theſe were the progreſſive ſteps of the art of writing, is evident from the accounts we have of the Chineſe, the Indians, the Egyptians, the Phænicians, the Æthiopeans, Etruſcans, and many other nations, ſcattered and diſperſed as they have been through the various diviſions of the globe.

To give the excluſive invention of this art, therefore, to any one man, or to any one people, is incompatible with that juſtice which is due to every country alike.*

* Sir Iſaac Newton calls Mercury, who was ſurnamed Triſmegiſtus, the ſecretary of Oſiris, king of Egypt; and this Mercury, Diodorus Siculus ſays, "was "the firſt who out of the coarſe and rude dialects of his "time, formed a regular language, and gave appella-"tions to the moſt uſeful things; he likewiſe invented "the firſt characters or letters, and even regulated the "harmony of words and phraſes."

The fact is, that points of this nature cannot poſſibly be aſcertained, buried as they are, in the miſty and impenetrable clouds of antiquity; nor is it of conſequence that they ſhould. The north, the ſouth, the eaſt, and the weſt, have ſeverally produced benefactors to mankind, whoſe inclinations and endeavours to be of ſervice to their ſpecies, have been as ſtrongly marked in one hemiſphere as in the other; they proceeded from the ſame ſource, and tended to the ſame purpoſes. Let the Egyptians, the Phænicians, and the Greeks, therefore, reſt in quietneſs with the credit which ſome writers have given them for the invention of letters; we will not endeavour to wreſt from them what, among themſelves, one perſon or other moſt probably deſerved.

The veneration which is paid to a character that has been of ſervice to mankind, is ſurely laudable, nor is the worſhip even

that hath in ſome countries been paid to ſuch illuſtrious memories, to be reprobated and condemned. Before the knowledge of the true Divinity deſcended amongſt us, what could be more warrantable than the religious reſpect, the deification I may ſay, which grateful people paid to their protectors and benefactors? Every nation owes eſteem to thoſe by whom it has been enlightened and amended. Their memories ſhould be celebrated, the remembrance of them ſhould be cheriſhed; even images, (I approach not here the pale of Chriſtianity) repreſenting their perſons or their actions, ſhould be honoured; and in ages uninſtructed by revelations from Heaven itſelf, what ſyſtem could be more commendable, or what ſo immediately productive of good conſequences to ſociety? The apotheoſis of a heathen was not like the holy election of a bigot to a celeſtial rank; to acquire divine honours, it was previouſly neceſſary to deſerve them.

'Twas

'Twas virtue only, or in arts or arms,
Diffuſing bleſſings, or averting harms;
The ſame which in a ſire the ſons obey'd,
A prince, the father of a people made;
On him, their ſecond Providence, they hung,
Their law his eye, their oracle his tongue.
He, from the winding furrow called the food,
Taught to command the fire, control the flood,
Draw forth the monſters of th' abyſs profound,
Or fetch th' aerial eagle to the ground. POPE.

I am well aware of the general objection to ſuch gratitude. I am aware too that our real and artificial neceſſities have been declared the firſt cauſes of exertion and improvement—ſelf intereſt always ſuppoſed in view;—and that luxury and refinement have, on that ſame ſelfiſh principle, been accounted the great promoters of arts, ſciences and traffic; that it hath likewiſe been averred, that avarice, ambition and envy, have been, are ſtill, and always will be, the grand ſprings to actuate the majority of mankind. Let them be ſo. What then? Shall man refrain from venerating the appearance of that which is praiſe worthy, becauſe the reality of it be rarely

with? The idea is confined. It is wrong to inſiſt on the defects of our nature; let us rather be liberally erroneous, than backward in the commendation of our ſpecies. The wholeſome purpoſes of ſociety require the ſemblance at leaſt, if not the reality of good in the human character.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT VIII.

FROM the hour in which the ſerpent beguiled the firſt woman, even unto this day, divines, philoſophers, and all thinking beings, have puzzled themſelves in endeavouring to find out, why ſuch a plentiful harveſt of evil ſhould have been diſſeminated among us. The inquiry is curious. To ſay it is neceſſary we ſhould ſuffer all the miſeries of battle and murder, plague, peſtilence and famine, all the perſecutions of bigoted and fanatic ſuperſtition, together with the other natural and phyſical evils to which we are liable, in order to our being rendered deſerving of a ſomething hereafter, is not only arbitrary and unſatisfactory, but pernicious, and has been moſt deſtructive in its conſequences. With a rooted opinion of this

this nature, what bloody tragedies have been acted! Have we not in our own times ſeen, and have we not heard of the pureſt and moſt ſimple doctrine under heaven, being turned, from ſuch conviction, to the vileſt and moſt dreadful purpoſes? To ſave the ſouls of heretics, how many thouſands have been doomed to periſh in agony and torment! The ſovereign, the all-wiſe, the all-beneficent Ruler of the univerſe, hath been ſupplicated for mercy, whilſt the knell of death has tolled unrelenting fury and extirpation on thoſe of a contrary perſuaſion. Are we not told of the innocent, the uninſtructed Indian, being barbarouſly reviled at the ſtake for not acknowledging that God, whoſe children exhibited no other character than that of blood-thirſty avarice, ſuperſtition and ferocity?

That gracious Power, unto whom man in his wildeſt ſtate looks up, hath, it muſt be

be acknowledged, ſcattered our way with the thorns of bitterneſs and affliction; he hath placed us in the ſtate where we inevitably ſuffer, "where we come up and are cut down as it were a flower." But the reaſon why miſery is ſo ſtrewn, the reaſon why it in general is ſo paramount to happineſs, is far beyond the reach of human comprehenſion. The limited faculties of man are inadequate to the diſperſion of thoſe clouds, which enſhroud the firſt principles of nature. Experience and good ſenſe ſay, therefore, to our race, Be patient, have fortitude, be juſt, an denjoy ſuch comforts, as in the ſight of unerring wiſdom are ſufficient for you.

All nature is but art, unknown to thee;
All chance, direction, which thou canſt not ſee;
All diſcord, harmony not underſtood;
All partial evil, univerſal good;
And ſpite of pride, in erring reaſon's ſpite,
One truth is clear, whatever is, is right. POPE.

Thus let us ſing; it will be the ſureſt ſign of our being reſigned, of our being content

content in our preſent ſtate, and of our poſſeſſing at leaſt gratitude of heart. There are, however, men, and thoſe of a moſt extenſive genius, who labour to deſtroy the great and the good effects of this humble ſubmiſſion, this entire reſignation to the will of him who made us. But are not ſuch men culpable in an unpardonable degree? Of what benefit to mankind can be the combating of ſo divine a tenet? Pride and philoſophic arrogance may endeavour to oppoſe that doctrine, the belief of which is eſſential to the happineſs of every rational creature. But is philoſophy to authorize ſuch wanton licentiouſneſs? Shame on that criminal preſumption, which would willingly deprive us of a hope that conſtitutes the greateſt portion of our felicity! Abilities turned againſt the peace and happineſs of ſociety, ſhould draw upon the poſſeſſor the execration and deteſtation of all who are anxious for the welfare of their ſpecies.

The

The ſacred truth of "whatever is, is right," admiſſible in all religions, is found generally to prevail in thoſe countries where the people are moſt civilized. But religious errors, even thoſe which gave inhabitants to heaven, and peopled the earth, the air, and the ſeas, with a profuſion of divinities, have been of infinite advantage to mankind. Religion ſoftens the human character; it ſtrengthens and cements the bonds of communities and nations; and if diveſted of bigotry and fanaticiſm, is capable of producing a multiplicity of bleſſings. We ſhould reverence, therefore, thoſe who took ignorance by the hand, and led her awfully and tremblingly to the altar; we ſhould venerate them, for calling in the aid of ſupernatural means, to the rivetting of thoſe moral duties, which they wiſhed to inſtil into the minds of their fellow creatures. Convinced of the validity of theſe poſitions, ſhall we apprehend the attacks, the ſneers of the

the infidel and the bigot? No. Men of ſenſe whoſe minds are uncontracted, and to them alone we appeal, poſſeſs that liberality which will not heſitate to agree with us in an opinion, which has naught but charity for its object. The carpings of others, too feeble even to recoil on themſelves, will evaporate in ſmoke, and die as ſoon as they are born.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT IX.

CHriſtianity, which would inſpire its followers with benevolence and good humour, has nevertheleſs inſtilled into men of certain deſcriptions, far different principles. The mildneſs of the goſpel has been transformed into gloomineſs and intolerance; I do not mean univerſally: I allude to particular times and to particular caſes. But in the name of heaven, how is it poſſible for a man, ſeriouſly, to advance it as his opinion, that thoſe who lived before our Saviour, and many who now exiſt, but who have had neither revelations nor miraculous aſſurances of his divinity; how can he, I ſay, aſſert, that they ſhould, one and all, be given over to perdition, merely becauſe they did not, and do not, believe in him as we do?

Can any thing be more monſtrous or more repugnant even to the dictates of that faith which we profeſs, and of which we are ſo juſtly proud? And yet there are who ſay, "there is no ſalvation "for the heathen." This pernicious doctrine originated with the Jews; and bigots among the Chriſtians have trod in the ſteps of their progenitors.

But why ſhould that nation, and why ſhould that little ſlip of ground, Paleſtine, have been ſo peculiarly bleſſed, as that none but thoſe who ſprouted up in the Land of Promiſe, ſhould be capable of entering into the kingdom of heaven? The elder ſons of Japheth, from whom, I think, it is ſaid we are deſcended, would, ſurely, in ſuch a caſe, have reaſon to complain of injuſtice; for why ſhould we, the deſcendants, be more entitled to ſalvation than thoſe our forefathers, who were holy and enlightened men?

men? This general condemnation of all, who are ignorant of, and who preceded the coming of the Meſſiah, is ſtrangely unaccountable; it is like the cuſtom of Borough-Engliſh, which places the inheritance in the youngeſt of the family.

Men like theſe, who hold the Divinity unjuſt, and who endeavour to bring him down to a level with themſelves, are, if poſſible, even worſe than thoſe who have no belief in Providence. For the one, the errors of our judgement, and the incomprehenſibility of the Godhead, may plead a little in excuſe; but for the other no apology can be admitted: their temerity is not to be pardoned. They make the all-merciful Diſpoſer of the world more capricious than even man; they repreſent him fickle, revengeful, and thirſty for the blood of thoſe whom it would ſeem he had created, merely that he might

have the pleaſure of tormenting them here and hereafter.

That ſublime Majeſty which is above us; that awful Power which animated all things, whoſe being we cannot diſcover, but whoſe exiſtence is engraven on the minds of all: thus ſhould God be repreſented. Yet we, who from the weakneſs of our nature, are incapable of inquiring into even what we are ourſelves—We, the atoms of a day, the children of ignorance and mortality, are ſtill adventurous enough to decide on a Being that eludes all ſearch; and that is neither to be ſeen nor underſtood by corporeal ſenſe. In every part of his works we perceive the Deity; we ſee him glorioufly diſplayed in every object of the creation: but to endeavour to reaſon, or to contemplate on the eſſence of the Divine Nature, is the height of folly and preſumption.

The

The innate conviction of a beneficent Providence, is surely sufficient for every rational mind; it is all that is required by the human understanding, when left to itself and to its own deductions. Arbitrary representations, therefore, are to be treated as baneful and pernicious; injurious to God, and hurtful to society.

> "Lo! the poor Indian, whose untutor'd mind
> "Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind."

Shall this poor creature, who only acts and believes as he has been taught, be given to destruction? The intelligent and the merciful among Christians will answer no: all men to them appear the same.

In the disposition of this globe, in the distribution, or the dispersion of its inhabitants, all men were alike possessed of understanding and judgement. Left, then, to the dictates of their own reason,

every ſect determined on the religion moſt ſuitable to its ſtate: the Egyptian adopted one mode; the Phœnician adopted another; Chaldea reared up her children to worſhip the Divinity in the emblem of fire; Iſrael walked in the ways of truth, agreeably to the Lord's covenant with Moſes. In this manner, every people formed to themſelves a theological ſyſtem of their own. Error, indeed, may have crept in, notwithſtanding every effort to the contrary; but where is that human inſtitution to be found which is wholly free from imperfection and frailty? When the Divinity condeſcends, by inſpiration, to ſpeak to his creatures, then the faith of thoſe choſen people muſt be unequivocally pure; but till then, ignorance muſt lead the world aſtray: and however moral we may ſuppoſe mankind, they yet are not of the elect, no ſyſtem of religion having been revealed to them in form.

No

No religion is uniform and invariable. Reaſon preſcribes no fixed rule for the externals of worſhip. Suſceptible of various forms, and liable to the fluctuating opinions of thoſe who are appointed to watch over the flock, the changes are great; but the internal ſenſe of it is ſtill the ſame. Could we, as I have already ſaid, but diveſt ourſelves of that arrogance and pride, which a blind attachment to our own particular way of thinking too frequently engenders; and could we but cruſh in the bud that hatred which too univerſally ſhoots up amongſt ſectaries of different perſuaſions, we then ſhould ſee religion (as its firſt principles invariably inculcate) mild and charitable. Inſtead of this, however, different religioniſts, led on by prejudice, bigotry, and phrenzy, turn, what they denominate, a holy zeal into perſecution, and the bittereſt reproach. What a reflection on our nature! What a picture of the hu-

man race! When the Indian proſtrates himſelf before the riſing ſun; when the Mohammedan turns himſelf towards the tomb of his holy prophet; or when the Chriſtian, in the fervency of prayer, addreſſes himſelf to his Maker; are they not ſeverally actuated by the ſame motive —the honour of God? In ſeveral countries, many unaccountable, and many extravagant practices, are, no doubt, mingled with the ceremonials of religion; but ſhould we abhor, ſhould we deteſt an entire people becauſe they are doomed, by heaven, to continue in a ſtate of ignorance? Or ſhould we perſecute them, knowing, as we undoubtedly do, that their intention is certainly good? Innate knowledge of good and evil, of virtue and vice, is not given to man: we acquire the faculty of diſcriminating their qualities, from the ideas we receive in ſociety; and not from any poſitive ſenſe with which we are endued. Were it

other-

otherwiſe, man would be invariably the ſame: the cannibal, the unnatural expoſer of innocent childhood; the ſavage who devours his priſoner, each might be common to every country; on the other hand, perfection might be paramount, and we ſhould ſee nothing but humanity, gentleneſs, mutual good offices, and the moſt refined ſociety.

To conclude, then, this ſermon-like Fragment, which I am afraid I have dwelt on too long, let every man follow the dictates of a clear conſcience: let ſuch opinions and ſuch actions be alone puniſhable as affect the peace of that community in which he is placed; and let all thoſe of the ancients, who unfortunately were, and thoſe of the moderns, who, from the ſame neceſſity, are ſtill uninformed of the tenets of the true belief, let them reſt with the charitable good wiſhes of every Chriſtian, and of every

every being who has an affection for his ſpecies.

> For modes of faith let graceleſs zealots fight,
> His can't be wrong, whoſe life is in the right.
>
> POPE.

Even St. Auſtin went ſo far as to acknowledge, that though "God would "not give heaven to the Romans becauſe "they were heathens, he yet gave them "the empire of the world becauſe they "were virtuous;" and that St. Auſtin was not the moſt tolerating of mankind, the hiſtory of his life is ſufficient evidence.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT X.

THE range we are now about to take, and the different countries into which it will conſequently carry us, will effectually confirm the orthodoxy of the text which I have wiſhed to eſtabliſh in the preceding pages. Nations of the moſt contrary diſpoſitions will come before us: we ſhall in all find a religion; but in none ſhall we find one that is pure and unmixed with error.

Tartary ſhall be our firſt ſtage: I ſpeak of Tartary firſt, becauſe, among the various people of the world, of whom we have any record, the Tartars certainly have the pre-eminence, both from their conqueſts, and from the kingdoms they have founded. Almoſt every age, from the

the earlieſt periods of time, hath borne particular marks of their amazing power and ſuperiority. It is unneceſſary, however, to go very far back: we ſhall content ourſelves with looking on them as the deſtroyers of the Roman empire; the conquerors and rulers of the vaſt dominion of China; the maſters of the Mogul empire, which included the whole of the peninſula of India; the lords of Perſia; and the poſſeſſors of other moſt extenſive dominions, as well in Aſia and Africa as in Europe.

The Tartars being deſcended, according to their own tradition, from the eldeſt ſon of Japhet, whom they denominate Turc, affords alſo another reaſon why we ſhould pay them the compliment of precedency. The near relation we bear to each other unqueſtionably claims it. From Turc, however, they did not derive their preſent name; it came to them from one of the ſons

of

of Alanza Cawn, who divided his dominions between Tartar and Mongul, the two eldeſt; and hence the diſtinction of thoſe nations, which hath ever ſince prevailed. The original deſignation of Tartary was Scythia; it then comprehended a vaſt variety of ſtates: it may now be ſaid to be partly independent, partly ſubject to China, and partly to Ruſſia.

The inhabitants of this very extenſive, and, in many places, very fertile country, have been, and ſtill continue, the rude, but happy, children of nature. They chiefly derive ſubſiſtence from hunting, fiſhing, and the milk of their herds; they neglect agriculture, and wander about as we read of the firſt Patriarchs. Notwithſtanding this unſettled way of life, they have a religion which conſiſts in the belief of the one ſupreme God, and the tenets of it breathe ſome of the moſt ſublime principles of morality. But what is ſtill more extraordi-

nary, they are guided in the articles of this faith by the hallowed decrees of a ſovereign Pontiff, ſtyled the Great Lama, who preſides over more conſciences than any other prieſt upon earth. The reſidence of the Great Lama is at Putali; his legates are ſcattered as their ſervices are required; ſome are reſidentiary, and poſſeſs almoſt an equal degree of power with the Great Lama himſelf, ſuch as the Dâla Lama of little Thibet or Boutân: they have the whole of the ſpiritual and ſecular power in their own hands.

An erroneous opinion very long prevailed, that the Grand Lama was never to be ſeen by ſtrangers; late diſcoveries have proved the contrary: foreign miniſters and travellers of diſtinction are always admitted to his preſence. The divine character which is allowed him by his people, renders it politically right indeed to keep them from too critical an

inveſtigation of his actions and diſpoſition: he rarely, therefore, expoſes himſelf to the view of his ſubjects; were he to do ſo, his mortality might be diſcovered, and the impoſition of his never dying might be aſcertained to be a trick. The ridiculous ſtories which have been circulated of the Great Lama are innumerable, and ſcarcely worthy of attention; ſuch as, that certain ſacred matters, proceeding from him, are ſold to his deluded followers at a moſt exorbitant price. The truth of this, I know, is univerſally believed; but I doubt it; it is too groſs to deſerve credit. Allowing, however, that the repreſentation is juſt, cannot we match it? I think we can; no leſs than the holy St. Chryſoſtom affords the proof, and to him I appeal: does he not ſay, that "it was common in his days to undertake dangerous voyages by ſea, from "the remoteſts parts of the earth, to viſit "Job's dunghill in Arabia;" and that thoſe

" thoſe who undertook this pious journey, " received from it infinite benefit and " much philoſophical inſtruction." Is not this, think you, match ſufficient for the Tartar? If Caſhmin, Thibet, Mongalia, or Bochara can equal it, I will yield the point, and will moſt readily allow that the Grand Lama's excrement is a drug of moſt ineſtimable value; and that to poſſeſs a little of it, a precious drop no bigger than a pea, no expence ſhould be ſpared.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XI.

THE character of immortal, aſſumed by the Grand Lama, is ſtill heightened in eſtimation, by the attribute of omniſcience which is veſted in him *ex officio*; and he ſupports theſe prerogatives without the ſmalleſt inconvenience. When he dies, (for they do not ſuppoſe that the body always exiſts,) the ſoul, ſay they, flies into the frame of ſome handſome youth, who poſſeſſes certain marks which are known to the clergy only: thence turning the lad's own ſoul out of doors, the Lama's gets poſſeſſion of its new habitation, and there remains, without diſturbance, until ſuch time as the inevitable decay of nature obliges it to change its quarters. The fact is, that children are always in training for this

holy purpoſe. Like David, a boy, is taken from tending his father's ſheep, and being approved, he is anointed by the Lama, ſucceſſor and ruler over the Tartar tribes.

The denomination of Kalmucks is given, without any ſort of diſtinction, to the various tribes and communities of Tartars which fill the ſpace between the Wolga and the wall of China. This proceeds from their great ſimilitude of feature, language, and religion. The different Hordes, however, have different laws, and different municipal regulations; and, as naturally may be ſuppoſed in ſo prodigious an extent of country, and where the patriarchal way of life is ſtill in its fulleſt vigour, the variations in their natures and diſpoſitions, their manners and cuſtoms, as you approach to, or recede from, more civilized nations, is ſtrikingly apparent.

The

The wild Tartars live in tents; the more refined have houſes upon wheels: theſe travelling habitations are far from being incommodious; they are raiſed upon a platform of wicker, carefully bound together; ſome of them are twenty, ſome thirty feet in length, calculated for all ſeaſons; they are readily made, airy, or cloſe and comfortable, as the ſtate of the weather requires. The ladies (according to their undoubted title) have the moſt elegant equipages; their vehicles are coſtly, and as beautifully adorned as the little progreſs of the arts among them can give one reaſon to expect. The attendant carts are without number; ſo that in the train of a rich Tartar, you may frequently ſee hundreds of theſe enormous tenements. The dreſs of the Tartar is rich; in the hot months his garments are made of the fineſt manufactures of the Eaſt; and in the cold, his raiment is of the choiceſt

furs that can be procured from the north. The moral character of the Tartars, is, in general, good. The crimes of murder, treaſon, &c. are capital as with Europeans; and juſtice is adminiſtered among them with the ſtricteſt impartiality.

Although the Tartars wander about from place to place, they yet, at all times, contrive to carry a multitude of wives. Polygamy is allowed; but the firſt wife is always the principal. Contrary to the practice of moſt other nations, where a plurality of wives is admitted, the Tartars are above the mean refuge of a ſeraglio; they allow their women freedom and liberty; and this confidence is very ſeldom abuſed. The women are moſt faithful. Adultery is rarely heard of; and yet, (however ſingular it may appear) it is an univerſal and an eſtabliſhed rule among this people, that the ſon, on the demiſe of

his father, ſhall have the optional choice of the widows, excluding indeed his own mother; and thoſe on whom he pitches are under the neceſſity of marrying him.

The ſituation of the women, however, taken altogether, cannot be very enviable. The words of Mr. Gibbon, in his elegant Hiſtory of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, are particularly deſcriptive of what a female of a civilized ſociety would feel, were ſhe unfortunately ſhackled to one of theſe roaming lords of the creation: "A ſelect band of the "faireſt maidens of China was annually "devoted to the rude embraces of the Huns. "The ſituation of theſe unhappy victims is "deſcribed in the verſes of a Chineſe Prin-"ceſs, who laments that ſhe had been con-"demned by her parents to a diſtant exile, "under a barbarous huſband; who com-"plains, that ſome milk was her only "drink, raw fleſh her only food; a tent

" her only palace; and who expreſſes, in a " ſtrain of pathetic ſimplicity, the natural " wiſh that ſhe was transformed into a " bird, to fly back to her dear country; " the object of her tender and perpetual " regret."

From the prodigious number of people which the regions of Scythia have ſent forth, one would imagine that polygamy was beneficial to a community; and that no connection of the ſexes could be more favourable to population. The fact, however, has been doubted, and apparently with good reaſon; for although a plurality of wives has been much more univerſally allowed than the ſimple ſtate of monogamy, as will more fully appear hereafter, there yet ſeem to be natural as well as political conſiderations which ſpeak forcibly againſt it. An equal proportion of the ſexes is generally allowed to be the conſequence of a man's being confined

confined to a ſingle wife; whereas, a great majority on the female ſide is obſervable in thoſe countries where his appetites are unreſtrained. Of this, both India and China, together with the nations of which we are now treating, afford ſufficient proof. Among theſe people, the women far outnumber the men; nor is the reaſon aſſigned, a bad one. It is obſerved by naturaliſts, that the offſpring of every animal partakes in general of the ſex of that parent which has the ſtrongeſt and moſt vigorous conſtitution; and that the women in India and China have leſs exhauſted conſtitutions than the men, muſt readily be admitted. A variety of attraction muſt enervate even the moſt robuſt man. The ſeraglio, therefore, cannot but be hurtful to the male propagation. In ſupport of this opinion, we find, that in Europe, where Polygamy is exploded, the proportion of males and females is nearly equal. I do not exactly recollect

the calculation; but I believe it is as 106 to 108. Europe, then, can boaſt of being in the trueſt and moſt eligible ſtate of nature; for woman being formed for man, and nature not allowing of thoſe adventitious claims of riches and diſtinction which firſt introduced a plurality of wives, the diviſion, by her rules, ſhould be as equal as poſſible; each ſhould poſſeſs his mate, the poor as well as the wealthy. Moreover the monopoly of beauty is a monopoly of the moſt injurious kind; it is a robbery; it is a fraudulent ſelection of the loveliest and moſt valuable treaſure that is given to man. Peace, happineſs, and population, can only go hand in hand, while freedom reigns, and while there is a natural commixture of the ſexes.

Polygamy, however, unfair and illiberal as it may be called, has yet the advantage, in every reſpect, of polyandry, or

or a plurality of huſbands; this is, aſ-ſuredly, not only a moſt unnatural, but a moſt abominable cuſtom. Something may be ſaid for a variety of wives, but that one woman ſhould cohabit with a variety of men, is too groſs to be dwelt upon. Happily for the preſervation of our ſpecies, this cuſtom at preſent is ſeldom found to prevail. Thibet, and the mountains of Affghaniſtan, are the only places that I know of where it continues to exiſt; formerly, indeed, it was common. Media was ſo celebrated for it, that a woman was looked upon with contempt who had fewer huſbands than five. Even Britain, the honeſt ſoil of Britain, ſome hundred years ago, produced females who would, without a bluſh, betroth their faith to a dozen boiſtrous fellows at a time.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XII.

AS if it were ordained that all ſhould be upon the ſame ſcale, the empire of Tartary is bounded by dominions of the greateſt extent in the known world: the Ruſſian, the Mogul, and the Chineſe. The Kontayſa, or more properly the Cawn Taiſhaw, is the ſuppoſed ſovereign of all territories of the Kalmucks; it is he whom we ſtyle the Great Khan of Tartary. An army of an hundred thouſand men is always in readineſs to attend him to the field. It is a doubtful point if the Kalmucks ever were in a ſtate of greater civilization than they appear at preſent. Nations unqueſtionably have had their declenſions and renovations; the decadence of one hath, at all times, thrown the principles of grandeur into another,

another, and thus revolving, we all of us may have had our reſpective riſes and falls, the records of which are not now in being.

> Like leaves on trees the race of man is found,
> Now green in youth, now with'ring on the ground;
> Another race the following ſpring ſupplies,
> They fall ſucceſſive, and ſucceſſive riſe:
> So generations in their courſe decay,
> So flouriſh theſe, when thoſe are paſt away.
>
> ILIAD, b. vi. v. 183.

One thing is certain, that many of the plains of this country are ſtrewed with monuments, whoſe age hath not been aſcertained. The bits of wrought metals that are found in them, as well as the precious ſtones which have been dug up, are vouchers of a degree of civilization, and in ſome reſpects of the progreſs of the arts. However this may be, the Kalmucks, though not perfectly refined, are yet a hoſpitable, courteous, and well-meaning people; the wandering lives they

they lead prevent any extraordinary efforts of improvement. They are content with what they have, and are tenacious of their liberty; what we call comfort and luxury, they call ſlavery and confinement. No argument can make them believe that man happy who is forced to continue in one ſpot. With their herds and flocks they travel about. Their whole property is of this nature: like unto Job, "whoſe ſubſtance was ſeven thou-"ſand ſheep and three thouſand ca-"mels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, "and five hundred ſhe aſſes, and a very "great houſehold, ſo that this man was "the greateſt of all the men in the Eaſt."

Notwithſtanding this ſimplicity in the manners of the Tartars, a ſimplicity which one would ſuppoſe the parent of humanity, they yet have cuſtoms among them which are in a high degree barbarous and ſavage; one in particular, is the

expoſing

expoſing their ſick and lame in ſmall huts on the banks of rivers, where, with a little ſtock of proviſion, they leave them to periſh, never afterwards giving themſelves the trouble to enquire whether they are alive or dead. In this reſpect the Kalmucks exceed the wildeſt even of the Americans; for although in America an aged or an infirm parent or relation is put to death, that the burden of attendance and ſupport may be got rid of, yet it is repugnant (agreeably to American feelings) to mercy and humanity, that thoſe who are incapable of aſſiſting themſelves ſhould at any time be deſerted. They ſhorten their days indeed, but they do not ſuffer them to linger comfortleſs, in miſery and in want. The peculiar diſpoſition of the Americans, renders this act, which appears ſo ſhocking to us, humane and moſt merciful to them. Accuſtomed to the ſight of ſuch deeds, from the time they become capable of obſervation, the horror gradually

gradually decreaſes as they advance in years, till the decay of faculties, or the deprivation of bodily ſtrength, makes it to them a matter of choice. They then call their kindred around them, and ſmiling on the friendly hand that meditates the blow, they chearfully reſign themſelves to that fate which they have always been accuſtomed to look to, as the inevitable, and the laſt and moſt meritorious act of their lives.

If barbarous, however, in the one cuſtom of expoſing the helpleſs, the Tartars are yet in others infinitely praiſe-worthy, and greatly to be reſpected. As I have already ſpoken of ſome, I ſhall here confine myſelf to the tenderneſs they ſhew to their women. In Tartary a woman is reſpected; ſhe is treated as the object of affection and regard, not as in Europe formerly, nor according to the cuſtom of many conſiderable countries in Aſia, Africa,

rica, and America, even at this day, where indolence is the lot of man, and where the moſt laborious work is given to woman. The Tartars rear their females with kindneſs; they do not humble them with harſhneſs and cruelty; and though neceſſity may compel all to be partakers in the common buſineſs of a clan, that which is given to women is always domeſtic, proportioned and ſuitable to their ſex. This indicates liberality, and is a certain mark of refinement; for nothing, ſurely, can be more ſavage than the ungenerous, the unmanly pretenſions of ſuperiority which is and has been aſſumed over weak but lovely woman.

Can any thing be more humiliating than the accounts given us by hiſtorians and travellers, of the vile occupations in which females in ſome countries have been employed? The feebleſt, the moſt delicate frame, enjoined the hardeſt, the moſt

moſt toilſome labour. How much is the ſituation of thoſe women to be commiſ-ſerated; doomed to the pangs, to the ſufferings of bringing an ungrateful off-ſpring into the world, and then to be employed in the moſt ſervile and la-borious offices for their accommoda-tion: as if woman were formed for the baſeſt end; for abſolute ſervi-tude to man. Proud, arrogant aſſump-tion! The ſource of miſery not only to woman, but to man himſelf. The forced ſubjection of a woman, occa-ſions, indeed, an abject compliance with the will of her tyrant; but where is the kind look, the affectionate participa-tion of the ſentiments of the heart; the numberleſs bleſſings which attend the li-beral; the refined connection of the ſexes? In this, and in this ſtate alone, is man to learn the value of the partner aſſigned to him by nature. Here he will find, that woman is the moſt admirable object of the creation; his thoughts will dwell upon

upon her with delight; he will cheriſh her in his boſom. The univerſe will be charming, only as relative to her. In ſhort, here is man to know and to contemplate the full value of his felicity. In not aſſuming the authority to which he has no pretenſions, but which has ungenerouſly been uſurped, he here frees himſelf from that which would evermore be an inſuperable obſtacle to his happineſs: he at the ſame time acquires the kind confidence, the anxious ſolicitude of a lovely companion, bound to him by gratitude, and by the moſt endearing ties of tenderneſs and affection.

When friendſhip full-exerts her ſofteſt power,
Perfect eſteem enlivened by deſire
Ineffable, and ſympathy of ſoul;
Thought meeting thought, and will preventing will,
With boundleſs confidence; for nought but love
Can anſwer love, and render bliſs ſecure.

THOMSON.

FRAGMENT XIII.

FROM Tartary we naturally paſs into China. This country is of prodigious extent. It is bounded by India on the ſouth, by Ruſſian Tartary on the north, by the ocean on the eaſt, and by Thibet on the weſt. The greateſt part of the eaſtern extremity of the continent of Aſia is comprehended within the dominion of China; beſides which, Japan, the peninſula of Korea, Tonquin, Cochin China, Siam, and Pegu, were formerly ſubject to its authority. The government of China is monarchical. No ſovereign in the world has more power than the Emperor of this country; and poſſibly no other potentate ever received ſuch unbounded marks of veneration and attachment to his perſon. He is looked up to

as the parent of his people; he is ſtyled their common, their univerſal father.

In the domeſtic arrangement of this mighty family, in which every one bears a part, the Emperor himſelf is not excuſed. He is ſelf-obliged to ſuperintend a diſtinct department, formed purpoſely for the ſecret inſpection of the affairs of the different provinces. In this wide circle of buſineſs, a deviation from regularity of ſyſtem is obſerved by the Emperor, ſo that no diſtrict can poſſibly know the time when it ſhall come under the ſtrict and ſevere examination of its ſovereign. From this ariſes conſtant attention, and a cautious obſervance of the ordinances of the empire.

The municipal regulations of China are peculiarly adapted to the ſcrutinizing conduct of their government. Each province, diſtrict, and city, is directed to

keep regiſters of every material circumſtance which occurs. Theſe are divided into ſeparate claſſes: in one is inſerted the improvements in agriculture, manufactures, ſciences, and arts; another contains the names, and the remarkable anecdotes in the lives of any celebrated perſons who have either reſided in, or been natives of the provinces: the third is the chronicle of political events. Thus from the hiſtory of his people, which is in this manner conſtantly before him, the Emperor is at all times prepared to apply whatever may be neceſſary in every, the very remoteſt, corner of his dominions; neither does he, while he keeps this watchful eye over the conduct of others, hinder the wholeſome repreſentations and remonſtrances of his people from coming before him, whenever they feel themſelves aggrieved. Abſolute as he is, he yet is made to conſider that he is mortal, liable to error, and therefore

to be admoniſhed. From this right in the ſubject to addreſs the throne, innumerable bleſſings are derived to the Chineſe; the tyranny and avarice of diſtant magiſtrates are checked; even the Emperor is told to proceed in the road preſcribed to him by his own law; and it is not unfrequent for him to promiſe amendment in his moſt public edicts.

Infinitely more ſuperb than the monarchs of Europe, the magnificence of the Emperor of China is unparallelled. In this reſpect, indeed, he has forgot his Tartar origin, though in others he ſtill perſeveres in the cuſtoms of his forefathers. A fondneſs for the chace is ſtill the prevailing diſpoſition of the Emperors of China; great part of the time that is unemployed in affairs of ſtate, is given to hunting and the diverſions of the field: for this purpoſe, as hath been the univerſal cuſtom of thoſe monarchs who have de-

ſcended from the Scythians, conſiderable tracts of country have been encloſed; and being deſignedly left uncultivated, are turned into foreſts for the royal recreation.

An infringement of this kind on the rights of a people, who are too numerous for the land they have to dwell on, and who are therefore compelled to live on the lakes and rivers, is greatly pernicious in an empire ſuch as China. In any country, indeed, it is injurious; but in China particularly, where a genial climate, a happy inexperience of war, comparative to other nations, and an abundant fertility of ſoil, have cauſed a population which exceeds every account that is handed down to us by hiſtory. Beyond the encloſure of the imperial foreſts, however, I do not know that any other exceſſes of the prerogative bear hard upon the

the ſubject *. It is not enacted in China, that "Every perſon whatever, without "any reſervation or diſtinction, as to the "rank, quality, or fortune of the offen- "der, killing or deſtroying any hare, "pheaſant, partridge, moor game, &c. "or uſing any dog, gun, &c. for that "purpoſe, ſhall, for the firſt offence, be "impriſoned not leſs than three months; "and either for the firſt, or any other "offence, be once publicly whipped in "the town where the jail or houſe of "correction ſhall be, between the hours "of twelve and one in the day." No, the Chineſe are too juſt to the common and unalterable privileges of nature, to admit of ſo ſcandalous an exertion of authority: it is left for a more enlightened people to trample thus ſhamefully on the

* In William the Conquerors time, killing a deer, a boar, or even a hare, was puniſhed by the loſs of the delinquent's eyes; while the killing man was to be atoned for by a moderate fine.

natural rights of mankind. I bluſh while I write it, but England is the ſpot where a ſolemn act of the legiſlature, as juſt recited, is in force. It is diſgraceful to the ſovereign power; it is hoſtile to the freedom of thoſe who exultingly ſtyle themſelves the ſons of liberty!

The Emperor of China, as I have already remarked, is denominated the father of his people; nor is this an adulatory diſtinction. It is the fond appellation which hath been given to the ſovereign from the foundation of their monarchy. At the firſt riſe of this prodigious ſtate, the parental form of authority ſeems that from which they took the idea of their government. The ſovereign, as father over his children, poſſeſſed the abſolute diſpoſal of all dignities and honours; no hereditary diſtinction was allowed. They never would admit that a certain ſpecies of men, unqualified,

qualified, perhaps, and even without pretenſion either to genius or ability, ſhould be uſhered into the world with pomp and oſtentation; neither would they ſuffer them to move in a commanding ſphere or exalted ſituation; they thought it baneful to ſociety. They would have every man the author of his own nobility; it was the ſpring of emulation, the great moving principle of all thoſe exertions which alone were entitled to pre-eminence. To acquire honours, therefore, and the ſyſtem is the ſame to this day, was merely to acquire a life-poſſeſſion. No diſtinction deſcended to the children of even the firſt in rank and conſideration; the moral character, or ſuperior abilities, could alone place a man in a conſpicuous ſituation: "Deſerve "ſupremacy, and you will be exalted to "command," was, and is, the favourite maxim of this philoſophic people.

It

It is not, however, that the citizen is checked by the unflattering reflection, that he, and he only, is to derive advantage from his acquiring the honours of the ſtate; a moſt extraordinary refinement of policy ſtill leaves him a ſatisfaction, that to grateful minds muſt be almoſt as complete as if all titles and diſtinctions were to paſs to the children, from one generation to another: this is the reflected radiance of honorary rewards. The ſon can ennoble the father, and throw the luſtre of dignity on the manes of his anceſtors.

I will not enter into the merits of this not unparallelled cuſtom of the Chineſe; I know it has its admirers. Hereditary diſtinctions are cried down as arbitrary and unjuſt; pre-eminence, it is ſaid, is alone due to merit. I will not diſpute the point; the eſpouſers of this poſition are poſſibly right. They are ſupported

on

on the grounds of the natural equality of mankind; but a perfect equality has seldom been found to exist: if it has, it must have abounded in anarchy and confusion, and in every species of inconveniency.

However humiliating, it is nevertheless certain, that in some governments an hereditary nobility is of infinite service; nay, that it is essential to the welfare and to the protection of the state. Even in absolute monarchies it cannot but be advantageous; but in the aristocratical and mixed form, how peculiarly requisite is it to tranquillity and peace. Men must be ruled; they never were ordained to wander in herds unrestricted and uncontrolled. Some hand must hold the reins, and that hand must guide the multitude under the influence and the sanction of their own laws. How often do we read of the daring influence of fortunate

fortunate and aſpiring leaders; and of the impetuous torrent of royal power, which has only been withſtood by the firm phalanx of an hereditary nobility? This is to be gathered from the hiſtories of all nations. Every people have found the bad policy of leaving the avenue unguarded, that would admit of even the ſhadow of deſtruction to their rights. As all, therefore, cannot be exalted, ſo experience hath pointed out the advantage of inveſting a certain number with a ſecondary ſort power; a power, which deſcending from father to ſon, neceſſarily eſtabliſhes a control that carries in itſelf the moſt effectual barrier to the oppreſſive ſtrides of tyranny and ambition.

That honours and diſtinctions frequently deſcend on unworthy objects, is certainly moſt true; but there is ſurely every reaſon to expect that men, who through the channel of their fathers, have ſucceeded

to

to any dignities, will as fully and faithfully discharge their duties to the state, as those who have owed their exaltation to caprice, intrigue, or far less creditable means. Merit cannot be sought after in every corner of an extensive empire; neither are we to imagine that merit is at all times an object of choice with the sovereign. In a word, the descent of nobility, together with the means of fortune which it generally affords to its possessors, is unquestionably a paladium of consequence in a well-governed kingdom. Educated with ideas of property and independence, men of an elevated rank are naturally watchful over the encroachments of that power which is invested with the supreme and executive authority; nor will they, while they thus guard their own privileges, entirely forget that those of their inferiors are equally sacred, and equally well to be provided for, as any which, by better fortune,

fortune, they have derived from the loyalty, the good conduct, and the bravery of their anceſtors: an hereditary nobility, therefore, while the road is ſtill kept open for merit to arrive at honours, cannot but be beneficial.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XIV.

IN like manner as the Chineſe, practically condemn the ſyſtem of monopolizing ſecular diſtinction, ſo they as tenaciouſly combat all attempts at clerical uſurpations. No civilized nation, perhaps, ever exhibited its prieſts in ſo contemptible a point of view; the paſtor is of as little eſtimation as the loweſt of his flock: whence this has proceeded, I will not preſume to ſay; it is a ſingular trait in the character of this people. In other countries, when the tattered garb, and the ſanctified deportment of the monk, have been often found to conceal the moſt violent ambition, and the moſt unbounded rapacity, ſtrong meaſures have been taken againſt the pretenſions of the clergy. They have been debaſed when they would

would have exalted themſelves; but nothing of this kind has ever happened in China. The prieſthood from the beginning hath been conſidered as inſignificant; and, what is very remarkable, the Tartars, who hold the government, have guardedly refrained from inſtilling into the Chineſe any of their own religious prejudices, or regard for them. Few offerings are made, and no tythes are granted to the Bonzes. They are not pampered as their neighbours, the Lamas; of ſome of whom Mr. Ides reports, that on a ſmall hillock, on the borders of China, and on an old birch tree that grows there, the Lamas make the Mongalian and other Tartars hang either their purſes, boots, breeches, or ſhirts; hovering round the ſpot, he ſays, as vultures, where the carrion lies.

The little conſequence, indeed, in which the Chineſe clergy are held, may have

have operated in ſome reſpects to the advantage of the ſtate. It has prevented the influence of ſuperſtition (the deſtroyer of the peace of every country into which it hath entered) from exciting thoſe diſturbances which have uniformly been obſerved to erect a government of deſpotiſm. The Chineſe tolerate every ſpecies of religion; they make no man act in oppoſition to his judgement: they have a national form of worſhip, the ceremonials of which being obſerved, the ſcrutinizing eye of the church extends no farther.

In this reſpect the Chineſe differ eſſentially, as we ſhall more fully obſerve hereafter, from the Hindoos, from whom, they ſay, they have derived the principles of their religion. Their diſſent, however, is liberal, and they are therefore to be applauded for it.

The religion eſtabliſhed in China, is founded on the moral aphoriſms of their great philoſopher, Confutſee, from whoſe writings (which he acknowledges to have gathered from the Bramins) the Chineſe are generally ſaid to have derived their beſt lights. The æra in which this amiable teacher of a truly mild doctrine appeared, was five hundred years antecedent to the birth of our Saviour: love and veneration have ever been ardently and voluntarily paid to his memory; his precepts are fondly cheriſhed not only in China, but in other parts; they preſerve his works as a moſt invaluable treaſure. Honour and reſpect are not confined to the deſcendants of this great man; even the edifices which are dedicated to him are approached with reverence.*

From

* Thus was the memory of Pindar venerated by the Greeks. Alexander the Great, when he attacked the

From the pure impulſe of virtue, and of unbounded regard to his fellow-creatures, Confutſee drew the eſſence of his doctrine; he never aſſumed the character of a prophet; he never pretended to the gift of inſpiration; he ſupported his ſyſtem by common reaſon, and by common means. "Reaſon," ſaid he, "is an "emanation of the Divinity; the ſu- "preme law is nothing but the effect of "nature and of reaſon; ſuch religions "as contradict theſe two guides of our "exiſtence, proceed not from heaven."

The annals of the Chineſe, which go a great way back, and with uncommon regularity, evidently prove, that from the earlieſt period of time, they have believed

the city of Thebes, gave expreſs orders to his ſoldiers to ſpare the houſe and family of Pindar. The Lacedemonians had manifeſted a ſimilar attention before; for during the ravages of Bæotia, and when they had even burned the capital, theſe words were written, by order, on the poet's door: *Forbear to burn this houſe, it was the dwelling of Pindar.*

in the exiſtence of one all-powerful, omnipreſent God. Idolatry, indeed, apparently prevails among them: but what religion has been at all times exempt from idolatry? Atheiſm is ſaid to have ſpread itſelf through the greater part of China: how far this may be true I know not, nor how far the aſſertion of travellers may be credited, (but which they have probably borrowed from Socrates) that many of the Chineſe will in mockery ſay of heaven and hell, "Who, "pray, hath come from thence, and "who can deſcribe to us the ſituation of "theſe abodes?" Theſe expreſſions, poſſibly, may have proceeded from a Chineſe, for a Chineſe may be ſuppoſed to have reflected and reaſoned as freely as a philoſopher of Athens; but I do not believe that atheiſm is prevalent in China; it is too dreary, too mortifying an idea for a thinking people to adopt. Hear what the celebrated Emperor Kamhi ſaid

to

to the Miſſionary Fridelli, when, in the beginning of this century, that reverend father beſeeched him to become Chriſtian, "Why ſhould I become Chriſtian?" ſaid he, "To the ſame God that the Chriſtians "worſhip, do I and all my ſubjects pay our "adoration. This is ſufficient. A change "of religion, in the ſovereign of an em-"pire like mine, might occaſion diſtur-"bances; and to prevent them is his "firſt and principal duty." This does not impreſs us with the idea of an unbelieving race. Some of the Jeſuits, however, have given them this character; and as very few, except thoſe of the catholic perſuaſion, have had proper opportunities of detecting the miſrepreſentation, it is not aſtoniſhing that it has adhered to the Chineſe in the manner it has done. But what would not vengeance and indignation dictate to that formidable ſociety of Jeſus? Their expulſion from China was held as an inex-

piable crime in the Emperor Yontchin. His words to the Miſſionaries on the occaſion, and which we gather from their own *Lettres Edifiantes*, are worthy to be recorded: "What would you ſay," ſaid he, "if I were to ſend a number of "Bonzes and Lamas into your country; "how would you receive them? If you "have found means to impoſe upon my "father, Kamhi, do not think I will "ſuffer you to deceive me in the ſame "manner. You would have my Chineſe "embrace your religion; now I very "well know that you will not permit "any worſhip different from your own: "what, then, muſt become of me and "my people? I am ſenſible that at pre-"ſent we have nothing to fear; but when "your veſſels ſhall find their way hither "by thouſands, times of trouble and diſ-"traction may enſue." If this was not ſufficient aſperſion for an anathema, even an Ernulphus's curſe, the Jeſuits never

never had provocation given them in any of their various perſecutions*. Suffice it then, with reſpect to the religion of the Chineſe, that they believe in the unity of God, though they worſhip him through the medium of idols; and that the reſidue of their creed conſiſts in a due obedience to the laws of their country, and a moſt perfect and implicit reſpect and veneration for thoſe unto whom they are indebted for their being.

* I muſt here once for all beg that I may not be miſunderſtood in the following pages: I mean no diſreſpect in any thing I may ſay to that moſt reſpectable body the clergy; no man feels more veneration for them than I do. I know them to be greatly eſſential in ſociety; and I feel them moſt juſtly entitled (excluded as they are from all lucrative profeſſions, for the ſake of the reſt of mankind) to the comfortable conveniencies and enjoyments of life, and thoſe at the expence of the community, for whoſe benefit they forego the uſual means of providing them. I level ſimply at clerical chicane and uſurpation, and no truly Chriſtian divine will, I am ſure, condemn me for it.

FRAGMENT XV.

WE have already taken notice of the provincial regiſters of the Chineſe; beſides which, they have another very uſeful cuſtom of inſerting in the imperial books, the date of the day and year in which every male child is born. By this precaution, the ſtrength of the kingdom can at all times be collectively and ſeparately underſtood. It affords the means likewiſe of the taxes being eaſily gathered in, and of levying them under ſuch equitable regulations, as that one diſtrict ſhall not be under the preſſure of a greater burden than the other. The general tax is capitation; from the age of eighteen, a man is obliged to pay a ſtipulated quota of his property; ſhould he arrive to the age of eighty

eighty it then ceaſes, and he, in his turn, becomes a penſioner of the ſtate. Old age, they ſay, ſhould always be provided for: the ſervices of younger days are to be requited in a more advanced ſtate of life by kindneſſes and comfort.

One great and original cauſe of all that reputation for wiſdom and ſagacity which the Chineſe have acquired, may be juſtly aſcribed to the uncommon attention which is paid to education. Excluſive of a knowledge of the doctrines of Confutſee and of the eſtabliſhed principles of government, they are reared with the ſtricteſt regard to politeneſs, and to the little minutiæ of attention and good manners; points of infinitely more importance than is generally imagined. The grand part of the Chineſe diſcipline, however, after the qualifications uſeful to the citizen are acquired, is in the ſtudy and knowledge of their language; this is attained with

with infinite difficulty: it requires the application of a man's life. The ſiſter arts of poetry and muſic, indeed, do not ſeem to have arrived at any degree of refinement in this country: the one, we are told, is devoid of imagery and fire; the other is certainly harſh and diſſonant, devoid of melody, and of the ſimpleſt modulation of ſound.

Though eſſentially different from the character either of the Greeks or Romans, the Chineſe are as fond of athletic games as were thoſe celebrated nations. They do not, however, carry their inclination for ſuch ſports to the ſame barbarous and bloody exceſs: wreſtlers throw each other; combatants encounter with lances, cudgels, quarter ſtaves, battle axes, &c. but they never are permitted to murder each other for the amuſement of the ſpectators. In plays and pageants they have likewiſe conſiderable

able diverſion; in ſhort, all exhibitions in China appear as if purpoſely calculated to dazzle the multitude, and to inſpire them with good humour and ſatisfaction both as to their ſituation and government.

When the leſs civilized Tartars eſtabliſhed a dominion over this country, they preſently perceived the ſuperiority of manners and cuſtoms in their new ſubjects: this induced them to adopt, at once, the whole ſyſtem of political and domeſtic regulation. Inſtead of compelling the Chineſe to tread in the ſteps of their conquerors, they wiſely gave them the lead, and were content to learn from the Chineſe themſelves the way of preſerving that power which effeminacy and irreſolution, and not radical defects in government, had compelled them to ſurrender. The only change the Tartars introduced, was in filling the offices of

ſtate;

ſtate; here they took eſpecial care that no Chineſe ſhould continue in employ without a coadjutor. Leaving the Chineſe, therefore, in the reſpective departments they had filled, previous to the invaſion, they only checked them from undue practices, by joining with them Tartars, inveſted with an equal degree of authority; this was not only liberal but politic. The Chineſe, above all nations of the Eaſt, had been celebrated for extraordinary caution in the choice of their magiſtrates: the ſtudy required as a neceſſary qualification for an employment of ſtate, was immenſe; neither could any man be admitted into an office who had not previouſly undergone the moſt ſevere examination, and who had not in conſequence arrived at the dignity of one of the literati. The vaſt extent of this country, the amazing number of its inhabitants, and the diſtance of many of the provincial governments from the ſeat of empire, rendered, indeed,

indeed, a careful ſelection highly expedient and neceſſary.

In China, the delegation of abſolute authority is exceſſive; it runs from the Emperor to the moſt inſignificant mandarin, in a ſtrong and copious ſtream. The viceroys may be ſaid to be little kings, ſupreme and uncontrolable in their governments; and yet, notwithſtanding all this omnipotence of the Emperor and his ſubſtitutes, the Chineſe have the certain indications of a contented and ſatisfied people. Even the inferior orders are well fed and cloathed, and boaſt that they are, what I verily believe them to be, the happieſt race on earth; it is obſervable in their temper and diſpoſition. The general intercourſe of ſociety is kept up amongſt them with the utmoſt politeneſs: they are ſeldom out of temper, and they are both ſeparately and collectively

lectively poſſeſſed of great benevolence and hoſpitality.

This account, I am ſenſible, is different from that which is handed down to us by a certain claſs of travellers and voyage writers; but becauſe a few knaveries have been detected in the moſt conſiderable ſea-port town of China, and becauſe the excluſion of ſtrangers from the courts of juſtice has prevented the aggrieved from acquiring that immediate redreſs to which they were entitled, is it equitable that the whole nation ſhould be involved in an indiſcriminate condemnation? Europeans ſhould look at home before they ſpeak deciſively: the firſt trading town in China is not the only one in the world where rogueries are practiſed, not merely on ſtrangers, but cooly and deliberately by one citizen on the other.

The

The Miſſionaries, who from their knowledge in ſcience, and their holy calling, and the miniſters of foreign courts with their ſuites, who have been admitted freely into China, have repreſented the Chineſe in exactly the ſame light in which they have appeared to me; but that which moſt firmly riveted me in the opinion, was the account which I received from a native of Caſhmiere, who in the garb and ſtyle of an itinerant merchant of China, had, for ten years, uninterruptedly, been travelling from one extremity of the empire to the other. His voice was loud in their praiſe: he had never been defrauded, he ſaid, of the moſt inconſiderable ſum. As to oppreſſion, he had been a ſtranger to it; whereever his fancy led him he went; thieves and aſſaſſins, never infeſted his way; his road he had always found a road of ſafety; and the people, good humoured and obliging on every occaſion, had given him

cauſe

cauſe to be thankful, that he had found a reſidence among them. The Chineſe have unqueſtionably been miſrepreſented; at the ſame time, that they have poſſibly been too glaringly extolled: their true character may lie between the two extremes.

From the firſt arrival of Europeans in China, the government, with infinite good ſenſe, has prevented their entering into the internal parts of the country, and from forming colonies, which might give room for apprehenſion. A few ſketches which had been given them of the manners and cuſtoms of the Portugueſe and Dutch, at a very early period, made them ſee the good policy of confining trafficking ſtrangers to limited factories. Hindoſtan, and the Malay ſhores, had preſented them with melancholy inſtances of what was to be expected, ſhould a free entrance be allowed to thoſe ſeem-

ingly harmleſs and inoffenſive merchants; they therefore ſagely took the line of excluſion: they ſtill keep to it with rigor and pertinacity; nor will they deviate, unleſs compelled or driven to it by neceſſity.

Thus debarred from the view of what is paſſing in the provinces of China, it is from report alone that we can form any idea of their municipal regulations: ſome of them have already been tranſiently adverted to; one or two more are all that remain to come within the ſcope of our inveſtigation. From the great extent of the dominion of China, the neceſſity of ſure and ſpeedy modes of circulating the orders of government was very early ſeen and provided for: poſt houſes for that purpoſe, long before they were known in Europe, were erected throughout the empire; but leſt the diſpatch by ſuch communication ſhould be inadequate

to the emergency, they fell upon another method peculiar to themſelves, but every way anſwerable to the purpoſe. This was the erection of lofty pagodas, or places of worſhip, at the diſtance of every eight or ten miles; from the tops of which, by fires and other lights, the alarm, or the neceſſary orders on urgent occaſions, are ſpread through every diviſion of the empire, and in a ſpace of time inconceivably ſhort.

Their moſt provident, and moſt to be admired regulation, however, and which continues in force to this day, is the law which ordained the annual ſtocking of the public granaries: every diſtrict is obliged to build ſo many of thoſe grain depoſitories as are proportionate to its number of inhabitants; theſe are always kept full, leſt a ſcarcity ſhould ariſe from droughts, or any other accidental cauſes.

If

If the harveſt is plentiful, and the enſuing crops promiſe abundance, or even a ſufficiency, the grain that is on hand is diſpoſed of at a moderate, but ſtated, price, and a new ſupply is gathered in; but if, on the other hand, a bad ſeaſon, or any other unfavourable circumſtance, give reaſon to apprehend that want may be felt by the indigent, the government then opens the gates of mercy to the poor, and feeds them at its own expence. No reflections are required on ſo charitable a practice; it ſpeaks for itſelf: I can only wiſh that ſo ſalutary, ſo humane a precaution, to guard againſt the neceſſities of thoſe who have not the means of being provident themſelves, were taken in all countries, ſubject to European authority, where famine has too often ſpread her baneful and peſtilential wings. Need I ſay, I look now to the Eaſtern Indies? England ſhould there advert to the bene-

volent inſtitutes of Ackbar, who feelingly thought of, and provided againſt the calamities and miſeries of the lower orders of his people.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XVI.

NOtwithſtanding the parental care of the Chineſe government, in eſtabliſhing ſuch ſalutary regulations for the well-being of the poor, the miſeries of want are ſeverely felt in China, and that not unfrequently: whole diſtricts are ſometimes laid deſolate by famine; nay, ſo apprehenſive are theſe people of a failure in their crops of rice, the ſtaple grain of their country, that the inhuman cuſtom, it is ſaid, obtains in ſeveral parts of expoſing children. I know not if this be true; I can ſcarcely give credit to it. It is well known that the Chineſe are, of all people, the fondeſt of their children; why then are we to ſuppoſe that a dread of future ſcarcity ſhould ſo far operate, as to make them

unnaturally desert their offspring, and that too in the helpless state of infancy, when their utmost wants could drain nothing from the public stock? Charity inclines us to hope that this stigma on the Chinese character is wholly devoid of truth: I never heard of it when among them, and yet I was particular in my enquiries about it.

The calamity of famine, indeed, in China is horrid beyond description. Millions are swept away by it; nor does it fail in general to draw along with it its sister curses, pestilence and plague. To avert these scourges of mankind, every species of art and industry is universally exerted; nothing is left undone that can possibly promise plenty in the provinces. From the highest to the lowest, the business of cultivation is attended to; all are farmers; all are to exist by the plenteous harvest of the field. They even pro-

profuſely bribe the images of their God, and by every kind of pageantry and proceſſion, endeavour to awake in him a conſideration of the nature and extent of their neceſſities: every ſeaſon is ſeen to exhibit ſhews to this effect.

In forming a judgement of the Chineſe diſpoſition, one might unwittingly be led to think, that a circumſtance of this complection indicated ſuperſtition, and a conſiderable degree of influence in the Chineſe clergy; but the fact is, as we have already inſtanced, decidedly the reverſe. The Chineſe have as little ſuperſtition, and what is a neceſſary conſequence, as little reliance on their ghoſtly fathers, as any people on earth; nothing of this kind proceeds from the church. The government alone is the propounder of all heavenly ſupplications; and it is ſo ordered, that the neceſſity and love of agriculture may be conſtantly kept alive in the minds

of all, the firſt officer of ſtate as well as the labourer and huſbandman.

How different the principle on which this cuſtom is grounded, to that of many of the ſenſeleſs pageants heretofore ſo prevalent in thoſe European countries, where the empire of China was denominated the empire of idolaters. An inſcription upon a church of Imprunata in Italy, ran to this effect: "The ſacred image of the Madona being "carried with ſolemn pomp into Flo- "rence, when it was viſited by a peſti- "lence for three years ſucceſſively, and "received with pious zeal by the Great "Duke Ferdinand II. and the whole body "of the people who came out to meet it, "and having marched about the city for "three days in proceſſion, the fierceneſs "of the peſtilence began miraculouſly to "abate, and ſoon after entirely ceaſed."

The

The Chineſe, more wiſe than the Italians, labour while they pray: their uſual ſupplications are for rain and favourable ſeaſons; while they are at the ſame time careful that ſuperſtitious idleneſs ſhall no way impede the important buſineſs of agriculture*. Their acquaintance with the effects of gunpowder, and with the attractive qualities of the magnet,

* The Chineſe do not admit the influence of authority to degrade their reaſon: they tolerate ſhews, and the pageantry of religion; and that, as well from the good which they are ſenſible reſults from them, as from their uſage, from time immemorial, but no farther. The Chineſe, however addicted to a tenacious veneration for old cuſtoms, are yet a wiſe people. They may be ſuppoſed (though I deny the fact) obſtinately trammelled in the ways of their forefathers; and hence, it may be ſaid, the reaſon why the arts and ſciences have arrived at ſo inconſiderable a degree of improvement among them. But I aver it, the Chineſe are an ingenious, and I repeat it, a wiſe people; and this can be proved from their being acquainted with almoſt every branch of knowledge held in repute by other nations. For this knowledge they are not, like Europeans, indebted to the ancients or to emulative rivalry; they find it among themſelves.

long

long before either was underſtood in Europe, is alſo a convincing argument of their being an inquiſitive and an inveſtigating people.

The uſeful, I will allow, has been in general the favourite ſtudy of the Chineſe; but the ornamental has not, in conſequence, been utterly neglected. When we view them as aſtronomers, it muſt be confeſſed, they appear in an indifferent light: mere ſatellites to thoſe glorious luminaries which have ariſen in the weſtern world; but if they have made no mighty progreſs in the ſcience of the heavenly bodies, they have the celebrated names of Greece and of Rome to keep them in countenance. If we conſider them in regard to painting and ſculpture, thoſe arts will appear with them (as with the Indians and Egyptians) ſtill in their infancy; neither do they exhibit any extraordinary proficiency in the art military; this

this may ariſe from their want of ambition, their domeſtic and peaceable propenſities, which render them happy in the poſſeſſion of what they find within themſelves. In lieu of all theſe, however, they can boaſt of a perfection in eſſentials, equal, if not ſuperior, to any which are now to be met with, or which are to be found even in the records of hiſtory.

Provident and careful, the attention of the Chineſe to the cultivation of their land is, as we have already mentioned, prodigious; no contempt is thrown upon the peaſant or the huſbandman; no diſcouraging ſupremacy is arrogated by the pampered, luxurious citizen, over the honeſt labourer of the field, who chearfully ſings as he ſcatters bleſſings for the human race. In a word, agriculture is encouraged and honoured, as the firſt and moſt natural occupation of man.

But, from the fields, when the means of ſubſiſtence are provided, turn but your eyes to the crowded towns and villages, which in ſmiling comfort and affluence cover the face of the empire: look to the manufactures of theſe towns; obſerve the ſtupendous canals, which, at an immenſe expence, have been carried through the empire, for the purpoſe of internal trade; mark the patience and univerſal induſtry which pervades the general character: theſe are the points of view in which the Chineſe muſt be taken. Let them be thus viewed, and they will be found rightfully to poſſeſs that eſtimation, which will ever inſure the reſpect and the trueſt veneration of unprejudiced men.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XVII.

I HAVE already ſaid, but it may not be amiſs to repeat it, that parental affection, a punctual diſcharge of obligations to the ſtate, and an univerſal attention to agriculture, are ſome of the moſt ſtriking features in the Chineſe character. So neceſſary, indeed, ſo incumbent is it on them to preſerve this character, that the Emperor, as father of his people, and even his delegates in the provinces, conſtantly hold themſelves out as examples to the inferior claſſes of the community. The Emperor annually exhibits, in the more public act of agriculture, an awful ceremony; where, to ſhew that he is nothing more than man, mere man, who muſt be fed by induſtry and labour, he clears,

clears, breaks up the ground, and ſows the firſt ſeed of the approaching harveſt.

In ancient times, the ſacred plough employ'd
The Kings and awful fathers of mankind:
And ſome, compar'd with whom, your inſect-tribes
Are but the beings of a ſummer's day,
Have held the ſcale of empire, rul'd the ſtorm
Of mighty war; then, with unwearied hand,
Diſdaining little delicacies, ſeiz'd
The plough, and greatly independent liv'd.

THOMSON.

Thus, likewiſe, do we read of the Incas of Peru; though deſcended from the ſun, they yet knew that the favour of their God would exiſt no longer than while labour and induſtry gave them a claim to his animating influence. The ſpring, therefore, ſhewed them to their ſubjects in the act of cultivating a field near Cuzco: they denominated it, indeed, their triumph over the earth; but the wholeſome example which it was meant to ſet, was only thus politically dignified with

with an appellation which ſtrengthened their pretenſions to a heavenly deſcent.

In the more abſtruſe and ſpeculative arts, we have already ſaid that the Chineſe have, through a long ſucceſſion of ages, ſcarcely arrived at a moderate degree of perfection; neither in phyſic have they made that proficiency, at which, from a knowledge of anatomy, practitioners in other countries have been enabled to arrive. Phyſic is in its infancy in China; and it muſt continue in that ſtate, until by a thorough enquiry into the nature of the human frame, they may be able to determine as to the proximate cauſes of diſtempers. The theory and practice of the medical art, therefore, is confined to the ſimpleſt preſcriptions*. We are told by a traveller into this coun-

* The phyſicians of the Greeks and Romans acted chiefly in the capacity of nurſes: they went very little beyond aliment in their preſcriptions.

try,

try, that a ſtone which is generally ten cubits high, is erected in a public ſquare in every city, and that on this ſtone are engraved the names of all ſorts of medicines, and their exact prices. The truth of this I will not pretend to affirm; it has ſomething extravagant on the face of it. Should it, however, be the caſe, it ſurely had its riſe in goodneſs, and is humanely meant to anſwer the moſt ſalutary purpoſes.

In reviewing the cuſtoms of various nations, I cannot help adverting to the ſanction which in every country is given to empirics: a ſanction of the moſt pernicious tendency, ſince every ignorant or pretending coxcomb is thereby enabled to trifle with the health, and even lives of our fellow creatures. To cheat a man of his property is felony in every civilized ſociety; and ſhall health, perhaps exiſtence, be leſs dear to mankind than tranſitory property?

perty? Let patents be ſold; let officers of ſtate be benefited by the ſale; but, in merciful conſideration to thoſe who know no better, let not pernicious noſtrums be vended; let not experiments be tried upon the human race: the idea is horrid; it is repugnant to every ſentiment of humanity. Is mourning, and all the wretched train of griefs, to be carried into an helpleſs family (for the rich can always have the beſt advice) that a few advantages may be derived to one, or to a particular ſet of men? And is the royal licence to be ſtamped on ſuch heart-rending calamities? Why, why will you not, ye rulers of kingdoms, why will you not interpoſe your authority, and ſave your people from deſtruction! Why will you not rather grant rewards for all diſcoveries in the healing art, and then promulgate them for the benefit of mankind, than ſuffer the ſale of drugs, the very compoſition of which

is unknown! Phyſicians of benevolence and candour (and ye are many) I do not here reflect upon the profeſſion, or the profeſſors of your art; I would ſtrike only at that evil which each of you would baniſh, if in your power, from the communities of which you bear a part. It is a ſcandal to the name of medicine; it is the principal cauſe of that odium and reproach with which you are indiſcriminately and unjuſtly loaded.

The phyſician in China prepares and adminiſters his own medicines: this is a wholeſome cuſtom; it in general prevents the impoſition of old, decayed, and conſequently pernicious drugs. The man of feeling, whoſe credit is at ſtake, will, while thus acting in a double capacity, be careful that his patients are furniſhed with what alone can be of ſervice to them. No clearings of ſhops; no connivances with apothecaries; no admixtures

tures of ingredients, poſſibly deprived of their power of operation, or baneful from their age, or other accidental cauſes. Here he will portion his means to his ends; and what is not unworthy of conſideration, here he will keep free of thoſe fatal miſtakes which frequently occur from the ignorance of men employed in the preparation of medicines, and from their deficiency in all profeſſional information. "Ye call them apothecaries," ſays Quevedo, "but inſtead of that, I "prithee call them armourers, and their "ſhops arſenals. Are not their me-"dicines as certain death as ſwords or "daggers, while their patients are purged "and blooded into the other world, with-"out any regard either to the diſtemper, "meaſure, or ſeaſon."

FRAGMENT XVIII.

AGreeably to the computation of the Jeſuits, China ſhould contain about ſixty millions of inhabitans; and conformably to the belief of the Chineſe themſelves, the foundation of their empire ſhould go as far back into the reign of chaos and old night as eighty or ninety thouſand years: thus, you ſee, there is a mighty number to ſupport a mighty age; but old as it may appear, I have yet an elder branch of the family to introduce you to in proper ſeaſon; wherefore, out of compliment to thoſe who lay claim to primogeniture, I ſhall refrain from any chronological diſcuſſion for the preſent.

The ancient Chineſe, if accounts be true, were averſe to foreign traffic: they

neither traded themſelves, nor encouraged ſtrangers to viſit their ports. What vaſt abundance, therefore, muſt their country have produced, to have fed and cloathed ſuch an immenſity of people; nor at this hour, when foreign commerce is tolerated in China, have this induſtrious people any real need of trade with any other country. That which they purchaſe of imports, they purchaſe merely from curioſity, ſuch as ingenious pieces of mechaniſm, clocks, watches, trinkets, and toys: viewed in this light, the Chineſe are certainly the moſt independent people on earth. They want nothing but what they find within themſelves; but where is another nation to be found which is not neceſſarily obliged to encourage external, as well as internal traffic? And which, even then, is more than upon an equality in eſſentials, with theſe highly-favoured Aſiatics. The ſilks, ſatins, teas, wares, in ſhort, the

variety of materials which the Chineſe markets furniſh, are prodigious: they formerly, too, afforded conſiderable quantities of gold; but the precious metals are now getting into a degree of eſtimation, which renders their reflux ſomewhat difficult. I make uſe of the word reflux, as the greateſt part of the gold and ſilver which is in uſe in China, has been poured into it from other countries.

Not but that ſhe has mines of her own; but the fundamental laws of the ſtate, it is believed, are adverſe to the working of them. The general circulation of gold and ſilver, ſay theſe ordinances, would unavoidably occaſion diſorder. We have every thing that nature can deſire; money could yield us neither farther means of ſubſiſtence, nor even increaſe of happineſs: thoſe who poſſeſs it in greateſt profuſion, exhibit the moſt unequi-

unequivocal proofs of diſtreſs. We will be content with the induſtry which hath hitherto been our never-failing wealth. It will be time enough to open mines when we can no longer do without them.

Happy had it been for Spain, and thrice happy for the wretched inhabitants of the new world, had a like forbearance operated in the councils of Madrid, a century or two ago: avarice would not then have ſet ſail with a mercileſs thirſt of riches; nor would bigotry and bloody ſuperſtition have followed the abhorred partakers of her ſpoil.

China, indeed, would have leſs to fear than the poor inhabitants of Mexico or Peru, were ſhe to produce the treaſures ſhe poſſeſſes; but ſtill ſhe would have reaſon to apprehend the prodigiouſly increaſing ſtrength and conſequence of cer-

tain envious nations, particularly Ruſſia. Nothing but a river forms the boundary of the two empires. While ſhe continues, therefore, the object of admiration more than of rapacity, ſhe may, perhaps, promiſe herſelf ſafety: it will be her own fault if the continuance of that tranquillity and repoſe, which ſhe has ſo long enjoyed, be at any time interrupted.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XIX.

FROM a jealouſy of the growing power of the Ruſſians has ariſen, it is probable, the ſuppreſſion of the internal traffic which was carried on from Moſcow to Pekin: the precaution, as it reſpects the eventual intereſts of the Chineſe, is unqueſtionably a good one; but in fact it is nothing more than a renewal of the pre-eſtabliſhed maxim of their government, of guardedly excluding all ſtrangers from too free an entrance into their country; and yet they muſt have admitted, in former days, of a much greater latitude to ſtrangers. This is evident, from the accounts handed down to us by the Hindoos, the Mohammedans, the Catholic Chriſtians and the Jews: Judaiſm even

even at this day is to be found in China.

The common opinion relative to the introduction of the Jewiſh ſyſtem of religion, and I mention it as a curious circumſtance, is, that about 900 years after the coming of our Saviour, a colony of travelling Iſraelites hit upon the direct road into this land of plenty, this ſecond land flowing with milk and honey; and as they always carried with them a diſpoſition of manifeſting their principles, they loſt no time in communicating to the Chineſe the doctrine of Moſes; inſtructing all who would embrace the faith in a knowledge of the Hebrew language, and iniciating them into the myſteries of the choſen of the land of Iſrael. From this ſtock the elect increaſed, inſomuch, that in ſeveral parts of the empire the Jeſuits found Judaiſm to have taken ſuch root, that notwithſtanding perſe-

perſecution, there were ſtill remaining, and not many years ago, thoſe who could read the original text of the Pentateuch, and who could alſo expound it with conſiderable erudition.

This account, I know, this ſtraying of the flock, is combated by learned writers: they ſay that the journey into China muſt have happened at leaſt three centuries before the Chriſtian æra; and they ſupport the aſſertion by affirming, that the Ten-ki of the Chineſe are neither more nor leſs than the ten generations which preceded Noah. Nor do they ſtop here; they ſtill proceed to declare, that even admitting the improbability of this their patriarchal tour, the knowledge of the law of Moſes muſt have found its way into China long before the period I have mentioned. The Chaldeans, they ſay, were acquainted with them; and who more likely than the Chaldeans to penetrate into China, and

with

with them ſome Jews who undertook to promulgate the doctrine of Moſes? Be this, however, as it may, ſtrangers, as I have already ſaid, muſt have had freer admiſſion into this country in former days than they have at preſent.

In the rude ſketches which we have already given of the Chineſe, we have glanced upon the few objects which we have found neceſſary to bring within the purpoſe of our inquiry. The adminiſtration of juſtice, indeed, has eſcaped us; a word or two on that head, therefore, may be neceſſary: the Chineſe, perhaps, of all people in the world, are the leaſt ſanguinary; their averſion to the ſhedding of blood is almoſt incredible. Murder, and acts of high treaſon are alone puniſhable with death; ſo that it has been computed, and it is imagined with great exactitude, that ten criminals are not executed one year with another in China.

China. What a merciful example to mankind! The whole globe cannot afford us ſuch another; ten out of fifty or ſixty millions! One century alone in England, and that too the ſixteenth, ſaw ſeventy-two thouſand miſerable wretches brought to condign puniſhment.

The courts of law in China, if we are to believe their hiſtorians, are moſt carefully watched over: the ſeats of juſtice are almoſt always ably filled, from a diſtinct order of Mandarines, who are of the higheſt dignity; and the adminiſtration of the true ſpirit of coercive authority, is no where more attended to. Bankrupts alone, I think, are treated with any degree of ſeverity; and that is only when they endeavour to defraud their creditors by concealing their effects: in every other reſpect they are gently dealt with. In this country, a poor broken-hearted man is never torn from his family and thruſt into

into priſon: the reverſe; he is aſſiſted; he is encouraged in every exertion that can be ſuppoſed capable of improving his fortunes. Would to heaven ſo bright an example were followed by the world in general! Debtors ſhould ſurely, in moſt inſtances, be looked upon with an eye of indulgence. From what innumerable accidents, from what unexpected fluctuations in the courſe of human events, does inſolvency often, and moſt innocently proceed: to bankruptcy, therefore, we ſhould not annex the idea of guilt; it is too cruel that opprobrium and inhuman treatment ſhould be added to diſtreſs.

Authority! unfeeling power,
Whoſe iron heart can coldly doom
The debtor, drag'd from pleaſure's bower,
To ſicken in the dungeon's gloom!
O might thy terror-ſtriking call
Profuſion's ſons alone enthral!
But thou canſt want with guilt confound,
Thy bonds the man of virtuous toil furround,
Driven by malicious fate within thy dreary bound.

HAYLEY.

The

The favourable impreſſion which I would wiſh to give of the Chineſe juriſprudence, will, I am well convinced, be conſiderably weakened by the evidence of many who have been in that country; nor are they altogether wrong; for ſtrangers aggrieved, deprived of their property, and denied the protection of the law, no doubt have reaſon to complain of the ordinances of the country in which they ſojourn; and particularly in China, where honeſty and fair dealing is moſt peculiarly expected. But the principal grievance of the trader reſident in China is, the difficulty of getting a complaint lodged before the magiſtrate, or any of the tribunals of juſtice. Confined to the ſuburbs of the town, ſtrangers are denied all acceſs to the courts in perſon; nor will the offer of any bribe or reward to even the loweſt citizen, induce him to preſent a petition againſt his fellow countryman. When we conſider this, therefore, and

when we reflect that a ready control is among all people eminently neceſſary, we ſhall rather be ſurpriſed at the good faith which is generally found among the Chineſe, than at the comparatively few fraudulent practices which are detected. The Chineſe government, however, is aware of the inconveniencies which eventually may reſult to ſtrangers, from this difficulty of recurring, with eaſe, to the laws of the country; and they have guarded againſt it in a manner the moſt ſimple and efficacious. They licenſe a certain number of merchants for the buſineſs of traffic with foreigners; their names are made public, and for their equitable conduct government itſelf becomes reſponſible. By this means, commerce is carried on in general with a perfect reliance on, and confidence in, thoſe with whom ſuch authority is placed; which confidence is very ſeldom abuſed.

When

When ſtrangers, indeed, indiſcriminately entruſt themſelves to men whom they are previouſly warned againſt, they muſt unavoidably ſuffer. Fraud and impoſition will be experienced in every commercial town: in a word, I have every reaſon to be ſtrongly grounded in opinion, that the laws and regulations of China are both merciful and wiſe. The provinces ſhew that they are ſo; and the provinces, or rather the inhabitants of the provinces, being the conſtituent parts of which the nation is compoſed, from them the judgement is to be formed, and not from the intereſted conduct of a large town where a different principle pervades, and where a different ſpirit animates, the body of the people.

FRAGMENT XX.

THE Chineſe, who are ſingular and characteriſtic in every point of view in which they can be taken, are moſt peculiarly ſo in all domeſtic regulations. The exceſſive veneration which they pay to their parents, does not ceaſe when thoſe parents are no more: it is continued to their memories while their children live. The cuſtom of burying, or burning, at the proper ſeaſon after death, which prevails in other countries, is held in abomination by the Chineſe. They do not bury their dead until a full year after the deceaſe; during this time the body is kept in a coffin, carefully lacquered, that no air may have entrance, and in that manner is placed in the moſt elegant apartment of the houſe, where it is ſolemnly complimented

plimented every day. How they keep the body from the effects of putrefaction, is difficult to diſcover; they do not embalm, although the preparation they make uſe of proves equally good, as a preſervative. At the end of the year the deceaſed is removed with the utmoſt demonſtrations of grief and lamentation, and lodged in a vault on the ſide of ſome ſanctified hill where it is regularly honoured with an annual feſtival: after this, the mourning is continued in the moſt rigid manner for two years.

"That which thou ſoweſt is not "quickened unleſs it die:" I paſſed over marriage, therefore, until the aged were interred. I now come to the connubial connection which ſubſiſts in China: polygamy is allowed, and ſecluſion from the ſight of any other men except thoſe of their neareſt kindred, is the lot of the

ladies; accident, however, ſometimes throws them into obſervation.

The general countenance of the Chineſe, I think, is far from pleaſing; the flatneſs of the face, and the ſmallneſs of the eyes render it deficient in expreſſion. The pernicious practice of painting, and that too of an inanimate white, which univerſally rages among the females, is alſo more than diſagreeable to one who is unfaſhionably content with nature in her ſimpleſt charms; but what I think particularly diſguſting, is the cruel and illiberal cuſtom of bindng the feet of the women: this is a moſt inhuman practice, and muſt have had its origin in mean and ſelfiſh jealouſy. At their births, the tender limbs of thoſe unhappy creatures are ſwathed from the toe to almoſt the knee, and thus compreſſed into the ſize in which they are always meant to be continued; the feet are put either

either into iron or wooden ſhoes, ſo that the foot of a full grown woman is no larger than an infant's.

To compenſate in ſome degree for theſe natural and artificial imperfections, the Chineſe ladies are attentive to and elegant in their dreſs: their hair, which is univerſally black, is neatly braided, and fancifully ornamented with artificial flowers, pearls, &c. Unmarried women comb the front part of their hair careleſsly over the forehead, ſo that a ſpinſter is immediately diſtinguiſhed from a matron; ſuch are the Chineſe females in externals. Of their education and mental qualifications I am not ſufficiently informed to ſpeak.

In a preceding Fragment, we have ſaid, that the Tartars, on their conqueſt, immediately adopted the manners and cuſtoms of the Chineſe: the treatment of

the ladies, however, was an exception which we ſhould have noticed. Freedom, and a more generous way of thinking, had taught the Tartars to look upon their females in a more amiable, and a more reſpectable light. They ſpurned the idea of an inhuman confinement, which ſhould entail pain and a deprivation of limbs on one half, and that the lovlieſt of the human ſpecies. Cheriſhing, therefore, the wiſe ſyſtem of their anceſtors, they continued to their wives and daughters the ſame unfettered liberty which they poſſeſſed in their Scythian fields.

Having thus related all that I have been able to gather, touching the general character of the Chineſe, I ſhall haſten to a concluſion. It is a common, and a very juſt remark, that no nation is behindhand with another in ſelf-importance and arrogant pretenſions; this is peculiarly conſpicious in the Chineſe.

Un-

Unqueſtionably the dominion which they poſſeſs is a fine one, perhaps the fineſt in the world: they are not, however, ſatisfied with this, they will alſo be the wiſeſt, the moſt puiſſant, and the moſt formidable; but here they are miſtaken. They have ſagacity, it is true; but valour, and all the hardy maſculine propenſities of the ſoul they are ſtrangers to. Indolence and effeminacy are their moſt ſtriking features.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XXI.

A SPANIARD once ſaid, "It was lucky "that Satan, when he tempted our Savi- "our in the wilderneſs, forgot to ſhew "him Spain, as Jeſus certainly could not "have withſtood that temptation." How much more reaſon would a Chineſe have to make this boaſt. The general opinion which has prevailed among the learned of Europe relative to China is, that it was peopled from Egypt. Abſurd as you may ſuppoſe this hypotheſis, it yet has been ſupported with all the tenacity, and with all the zeal of ſyſtem-working genius. Animals, fiſhes, birds of every denomination, are every where to be met with; but man, poor man, is never to be found indigenous. Strange that ability ſhould be exerted to eſtabliſh ſuch extra-

vagant and arbitrary poſitions. Aſk you whence came the people of India? The anſwer is ready for you in a moment, from Egypt. Whence came the people of China? From Egypt. Whence thoſe of America? Why from Egypt to be ſure. Do not ſmile, Egypt is, ſeriouſly ſpeaking, the declared parent of almoſt all colonization. The ſtep to America, therefore, was nothing; it could not, indeed, be conveniently accounted for in a direct line. Collateral branches, however, were not wanting, and thoſe were made uſe of. The Chineſe, the lineal deſcendants of a ſtrong party from Egypt, were placed in the front ground: from them iſſued multitudes who peopled the innumerable iſlands that lie ſcattered around their empire. From theſe again ſprang the inhabitants of Otaheite, the Society Iſles, and others. Voyages, ſhipwrecks, &c. ſerved the purpoſes on the ſouthern ſhores of America, while the

northern

northern extremity of Aſia, peopled from the ſame ſource, admitted of a deſcent (for the journey was nothing through Siberia) of a formidable body into the land, now poſſeſſed by the Eſquimaux. In ſhort, Egypt has been dignified with the appellation of the general nurſery of mankind, and China, the prodigious empire of China, is allowed to be one of her firſt-born.

As children, then, of this celebrated people, it is not ſurpriſing that in certain matters their taſte ſhould be the ſame, and that they ſhould delight, as we ſhall find their progenitors did, more in the maſſive and enormous, than in the elegant and ſuperb. The moſt remarkable inſtance of this taſte in the Chineſe, is in the immenſe wall which runs from the bay of Nankin acroſs rivers, and the tops of the higheſt mountains, for the diſtance of 1400 miles, until it ends in

in inacceſſible deſerts. The learned ſuppoſe this wall to be the wall mentioned by the ancients as the rampart of Gog and Magog; and Ezekiel is directed by the Lord "to ſet his face againſt Gog, "the land of Magog, the Chief Prieſt "of Meſheck and Tubal." This wondrous monument of induſtry, intended originally (though it failed of its purpoſe) for keeping off the Tartars, is ſtill in high preſervation. The height of it is determined by the nature of the ground; in ſome parts, ſuch as where it is continued over mountains, it is not more than eighteen or twenty feet; in others thirty feet in breadth, and in the diſpoſition of the towers which are erected on it, it is generally uniform and regular, twenty feet the breadth, and about a quarter of a mile the ſpace between the buildings. The time employed in this amazing work, the moſt extraordinary of

which

which we have any tradition, was ſcarcely ſix years.

Beſides this wall, we are told by the Jeſuits, of mountains cut with vaſt labour and expence, into the figures of tygers, lions, dragons, &c. Father Martini, eſpecially, mentions a ſtupendous hill ſhaped into a ſtatue of ſuch prodigious ſize, that its noſe and ears are to be diſcovered at the diſtance of ſeveral miles. Here, then, we ſhall take our leave of China and the Chineſe, juſt obſerving, that their firſt ſubjection to the Tartar arms by Zingis Cawn, was in the year of Chriſt 1232, and of the higeira 630: that an indiſputed poſſeſſion of the throne was kept by the ſucceſſors of Zingis Cawn for about ninety years, when the then ſucceſſor was expelled from it by the general ſuffrage of the nation; and that they did not regain poſſeſſion until the 1644th year of our Chriſtian æra.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XXII.

LEAVING China, we proceed to Japan: the empire of Japan, as far as a knowledge of its hiſtory has reached us, is of high antiquity. From its inſular ſituation, and from its vicinity to China, one would naturally ſuppoſe its firſt inhabitants might have come from thence; but this is not admitted. Travellers who have viſited Japan, at leaſt ſome of them, are of opinion, that at the diſperſion of thoſe under the weight of whoſe preſumption the land of Shenaâr groaned, a nimble tribe, more active and more enterpriſing than the reſt, forced a long march to the confines of China, and thence croſſed to the iſlands of Japan; iſlands but little tempting to appearance, and conſtantly ſubject to volcanoes and the

the moſt tempeſtuous ſtorms. Here, however, it is ſaid, a colony of the builders of Babel came, and from them aroſe an empire of no inconſiderable importance in the annals of the eaſtern world.

The government of Japan is veſted in one perſon, ſtyled the Daïro, who is both ſovereign and chief prieſt, and, as in all other countries where the people are greatly addicted to ſuperſtition, the earthly and heavenly character aſſumed by this royal pontiff, has acquired him the moſt unlimited obedience, and the moſt devoted attachment to his ſacred perſon: ſuch was formerly the ſituation of the Daïro. Whether it has lowered in its conſequence, I will not pretend to ſay; writers go ſo far as to affirm, it was uſual to pay divine honours to the Daïro even whilſt living; an adulation, though not greater than that of the Romans,

mans, in ſome period of their ſtory, yet infinitely more extravagant than all the nonſenſe of the Tartars with their Lama and his immortality.

But even this, in the opinion of the Japaneſe, was inadequate to what was due to their Daïro. It was not ſufficient that he ſhould have a heavenly rank; the perfection of his nature rendered it likewiſe indiſpenſable that he ſhould be exempted from the ſuſpicion of delighting in earthly gratifications. Hence the Daïro, for the preſervation of the mummery of ſtate, was compelled to relinquiſh almoſt every kind of recreation and amuſement. As a deſcendant of the gods, his feet were never to touch the ground: as their immediate repreſentative, he could not receive any obligation; and of courſe, though ſhivering, perhaps, with cold, and when the chearing influence of the ſun would be moſt agreeable, he was precluded

cluded the benefit of a ray of that exhilarating luminary.

What the Daïro gave up in comfort, however, (and much of what has been ſaid of him you will readily believe fictitious) he gained in that flatulent ſpecies of praiſe which gratifies vanity. His people worſhipped him; the morning always ſaw him ſeated on his throne, where, with eyes fixed and an immoveable poſition of body, he continued for hours together, ſhewing his ſubjects, by an emblem of ſuch ſublimity, that repoſe was alone procured to the ſtate by the ſtillneſs of the ſovereign of the world.

The extremes to which it is poſſible to ſeduce the mind of man is unaccountable; nothing ſo falſe, but what may be impoſed upon the credulous. It is not our purpoſe, or I could eaſily reconcile this ſenſeleſs farce of the Japaneſe pontiff with

with a thouſand equally ridiculous inſtances, from the theological records of other nations; but the time would be miſ-ſpent. I ſhall content myſelf, therefore, with merely reminding you of the arrogance of our own prieſts in the younger days of chriſtianity. Not a volume of the firſt fathers but teems with abſurdity and holy preſumption; none of them went indeed ſo far as to lay claim to immortality, or to this character of the Daïro, which was virtually no higher than that of a heavenly automaton; but all of them previouſly inſiſted on unbounded pre-eminence and infallible ſupremacy. "It is execrable that holy hands," ſays Urban, "appointed to perform what was "never granted to any angel, to create "God the creator, and offer him to God "the Father for the ſalvation of man-"kind, ſhould be reduced to the humi-"liating baſeneſs of ſlaviſhly mingling "with profane hands, which, beſides

" being ſoiled with rapine and blood-ſhed,
" are day and night employed in impure
" offices and obſcene contacts."

The Japaneſe, however, ridiculous as was the homage they paid to their Daïro, (for I do not aver that they continue the practice ſtill) were yet influenced in a great degree, to a diſcharge of the moral duties of ſociety, by the principles which it was eſtabliſhed that he ſhould inculcate, and, by the hope and perſuaſion, which it was his duty to teach and cheriſh, of the immortality of the ſoul. This was a prevailing doctrine among the Japaneſe; it afforded them comfort; they contemplated it with ardor, and, conſequently, conformed themſelves to a ſtrict obſervance of all arts of ſocial kindneſs, beneficence, and good will.

Sectaries, indeed, as in every religion upon earth, ſprung up among them; and they

they carried the phrenzy of enthuſiaſm to the greateſt exceſs. The moſt to be pitied, however, of all who ſeceded from the eſtabliſhed church, were thoſe, who ſcorning the bleſſings of life, and preaching up auſterities and mortification, blindly threw away what at the moment they could have enjoyed, for the ideal proſpect of a ſomething in futurity, which fancy, and fancy only could depicture. Of this latter ſect, bearing ſome affinity with the Carthuſian, were their ſtouteſt warriors. An uniform contempt of life, rendered them indifferent to death. They held the extinction of the vital ſpark as a matter of no regret; they even, like the ſtoics, prided themſelves in anticipating the hand of fate.

It is not within the nature of my deſign that we ſhould always confine ourſelves to a ſet mode of inquiry, or that we ſhould always inveſtigate or criticiſe

minutely. With the Japaneſe, therefore, I ſhall be brief: the only judgement I can form of them, is from the accounts which have been publiſhed, and which are in every body's hands. Theſe make them, in the eye of impartial reaſon, an intelligent, ſagacious, generous, and humane people; well acquainted with the principles of liberty, and nouriſhing the moſt fond regard to it, from a conviction of its value. Quick in their diſpoſition to revenge, but forbearing, liberal, and candid, when not rouſed by injury; ſenſible of the charms of ſociety, and refined in their manners, cuſtoms, and intercourſe with the world. Such was the ſtate in which Japan was found when viſited firſt by Europeans: what it is now I will not pretend to ſay.

The reigning family of Japan, it is ſaid, aſcended the throne about the year of Chriſt 660; for ages it continued in tran-

tranquility. Many convulſions, however, and civil wars, from the fourteenth to the ſixteenth century, are known to have ſhaken the empire. It was diſcovered by the Portugueſe in the year 1542, and it was then involved in all the horrors of civil diſſention.

FRAGMENT XXIII.

THE Portugueſe diſcovered the iſlands of Japan. Misfortune firſt threw them on thoſe tempeſtuous ſhores; but hoſpitality and kindneſs gave them a generous and a permanent eſtabliſhment. Ignorant of the pretenſions of the Portugueſe, and uninformed of the property which thoſe voyagers claimed in every country of the Eaſt, the Japaneſe harboured no ſuſpicion of them. They allowed them to erect factories; their Miſſionaries to make converts; and their commerce to ſpread with every ſpecies of immunity. Little did they know that they foſtered a ſnake in their boſoms, which would one day requite them with treachery and bloodſhed.

Situated

Situated at the diſtance of many thouſand leagues, and having the greateſt part of the habitable globe between them, it never could have occurred to the Japaneſe, that a prieſt of Rome ſhould have the folly or preſumption to think of diſpoſing of a dominion unknown to the people of the Weſt; or that he ſhould ſay to the ſovereign of his own hemiſphere, "I give the countries in the eaſtern extremities of Aſia to a prince of the Catholic houſe of Portugal." The idea would have been too mad for the verieſt viſionary that every played with the imagination; and yet this ſolemn inveſtiture, unknown to the miſerable, devoted inhabitants themſelves, was made by Alexander VI. in a bull which he iſſued anno. 1493. To Spain, in the plenitude of his power, he granted the ſovereignty of the Weſt, and to Portugal the ſovereignty of the Eaſt. He even authoriſed them "with the aid of the

" divine mercy" to ſubjugate, and bring into the boſom of the holy Catholic communion, the numerous people that dwelt in thoſe extenſive regions.

This arrogant exertion of clerical uſurpation, this palpable deviation from that ſelf-denial and humility which was bequeathed to all prieſts by our Saviour in his teſtament; this, I do not know what to call it, this impudence in the head of the Chriſtian church, founded on a paſſage of the Septuagint, as cited by St. Auſtin, " To the faithful man belongs a " whole world of riches; to the infidel " or unfaithful, not even a farthing," was ſurely the moſt extraordinary that ever yet entered into the brain of man; it is ſcarcely to be credited, but ſo it was. The Chriſtian world ſubmitted to it, and the favoured potentates poſſeſſed themſelves, by force or treachery, of this ſacred

cred gift; a gift derived to them immediately from God!

The Japaneſe, ignorant of this holy donation of Alexander VI. with extended arms, welcomed the unfortunate ſtrangers to their ſhores, and cheriſhed them as if they had been their brethren; but this felicity was not to be of long continuance, it ſoon was to have a check. It is not eſſential that we ſhould enquire into all the particulars of the Portugueſe eſtabliſhment in Japan, it is ſufficient that their abode was made both comfortable and advantageous to them; and that they were increaſing in affluence and conſequence when the Dutch, ſmarting with the wounds inflicted on their countrymen by the mercileſs hand of Alva, appeared in the ſeas of Aſia.

Wrought up to phrenſy at the unexpiated blood of their fellow-citizens, thirſting

thirſting for revenge, and ſtimulated by an intolerance almoſt equal to that of their perſecutors, the Dutch threw off all reſtraint of mercy with the Portugueſe, the newly-become ſubjects of Philip II. of Spain: every part of the Eaſt became witneſs of this ſanguinary ſtruggle*.

It is not fair, nor is it conſiſtent with hiſtoric truth, although it has been confidently aſſerted, that the perſecution of the Catholics, which afterwards enſued in Japan, ſhould be attributed to the intrigues and the miſrepreſentations of the Dutch. Much miſmanagement, every one muſt confeſs, was evident on the part of the Portugueſe. The moſt glaring, and probably the moſt deſtructive, was the intemperate zeal of the fathers of the church.

* Japan unfortunately exhibited it, in its moſt awful colours.

To

To interfere with the intereſts of prieſts can never be allowed with impunity; the Portugueſe Miſſionaries ſhould have known this, but inſtead of temperance and humility, they manifeſted dangerous diſpoſitions towards intolerance and abſolute exaltation. The Bonzes ſaw it and murmured, but the Chriſtian paſtors ſtill continued to graſp; complaints, then became common. The evil, however, ſtill gained ground: nothing was heard but reciprocal invective and reproach. In ſhort, from avidity on the one ſide, and apprehenſion on the other, the conteſt was ſoon brought to an iſſue. Every one took his line; no man could be neuter. Sovereign and all became involved. In a word, Japan againſt Japan, revenged the religious quarrels of Europeans.

Religious diſputes have never yet been terminated without a dreadful effuſion of blood; this was the caſe in the preſent inſtance.

inſtance. The Emperor, at firſt indifferent and unſuſpecting, allowed the differences of opinion which ſubſiſted between the Portugueſe and his own ſubjects, ſtimulated by the Dutch, to take their courſe. He reſolved on caution and forbearance; and as he tolerated every ſort of worſhip, ſo he conceived it of importance to refrain from every ſort of interference. Matters, however, could not continue long in ſuch a ſituation; deciſion at length became neceſſary. The Emperor ſaw it, and reluctantly took up arms againſt the Portugueſe, whom he conceived to be the aggreſſors.

The iſſue of the ſtruggle ſo unequally matched, and ſo peculiarly circumſtanced, was moſt tragical. Sixty thouſand Chriſtians periſhed either in the field, or by the hand of the executioner. No follower of the ſacred ſtandard of the croſs remained to tell the ſtory. The whole

whole body of the Catholics was extirpated; every veſtige of chriſtianity was aboliſhed; and the re-introduction of it prohibited under the moſt dreadful penalties. Thus did the day ſet, whoſe dawn had been ſo propitious to the children of Portugal.

A contradiction of what I have now ſaid, may, indeed, appear, in the intercourſe which is kept up with Japan by the Dutch; but in fact there is no contradiction, if the matter be properly conſidered. The Dutch know the execration in which the name of Chriſtian has, is, and always muſt be held by the Japeneſe; and as their views are turned ſolely to commercial purpoſes, and to the acquiſition of wealth, they do not allow themſelves the privilege of exceſſes on the ſcorce of religion. They even go ſo far, it is alledged, as to deny the firſt principles of their faith; and as a writer

of

of their own nation ſays, if a Japaneſe aſks a native of the United Provinces of what belief he is, he readily replies, "I "am no Chriſtian; I am a Dutchman."

I have already ſaid, that the ſtriking features of the Japaneſe character are thoſe of hoſpitality and good humour. This is evident from the accounts given us by travellers of all nations; the Engliſh in particular, and they at one time had an opportunity of ſtudying them. The Engliſh are warm in their praiſe of the Japaneſe. The only fault they found while the Dutch permitted them to reſide at Japan, was in the uniform prohibition of the introduction of eccleſiaſtics; but even in this they confeſs the Japaneſe were not to be blamed. However illiberal, they at firſt conceived the precaution; they afterwards had reaſon to acknowledge them defenſible, if not commendable, in ſhutting their hoſpitable

pitable doors, when the opening of them would, in their apprehenſion, be probably requited with a ſecond entrance of bloody zeal, and murderous infatuation.

No people under Heaven, if we except South America, and I mean not to give offence, have had ſuch reaſon to curſe Chriſtians and Chriſtianity, as the Japaneſe. "Your King," ſaid the Emperor to an Engliſhman who was ſuing for permiſſion to erect a factory for the purpoſe of traffic, "your King* has married the "daughter of the King of Portugal, "whoſe ſubjects have filled my dominion "with horror and deſolation. The ſer-"vants of your maſter may be as cruel, "perhaps, as thoſe they are willing to "ſucceed. No trade, therefore, ſhall be "carried on between you and the ſub-"jects of Japan. Go, return to your

* Charles II.

country,

" country, where, at a diſtance, I can only " hear of the name of Chriſtian. That " which you may ſtand in need of ſhall be " ſupplied you. I wiſh you well. I would " I could ſay more; but the blood which " has been already ſpilt ſhews me how " cautious I ſhould be in admitting Chriſ- " tians into a land which will have cauſe " to execrate them ſo long as Japan has a " ſon to mourn."

Nothing farther occurs to me on the ſubject of Japan, excepting the mention of its having been ſubjected at different periods to the dominion of China; and that it once, and nearly with ſucceſs, attempted, in return, to reduce the Chineſe to a ſimilar ſituation. The peninſula of Korea, was to afford the Japaneſe an entrance into the Chineſe territories. The ſcheme, however, failed, from the ſingular heroiſm of a Korean nobleman, who ſeeing inevitable ruin, ſhould the Japaneſe ſucceed,

ſucceed, generouſly reſolved upon ſacrificing his own life to the liberties of his country. The method he adopted was that of poiſon; he firſt drank of it himſelf, infuſed in wine, and then preſented it to the Japaneſe Emperor, on whom alone the fate of the expedition, he knew, was to depend, and who had intruſted him with the ſecret. The Emperor followed the example of the Korean; he drank the poiſon. The effects ſoon declared themſelves; both expired in the moſt excruciating agonies.

A treacherous deprivation of life, whatever good may reſult from it, is ſurely unmanly, and muſt evermore be condemned. Many Machiavelian arguments, it is true, are uſed in vindication of it. Brutus has been held out; Brutus has been immortalized for ſtabbing his patron and his friend; but no arguments can

ſanctify an atrocious deed. Sophiſtry may, to ſome, reconcile an act which in itſelf may be eſſentially ungenerous and baſe; but an honeſt mind will ſhudder at even patriotic aſſaſſination. There are, however, degrees of palliation. The conduct of the Korean may be entitled to one of them. He certainly ſacrificed himſelf; and in ſo doing, in great meaſure wiped off the ſtain which would otherwiſe, in my mind, have ſtamped his name with indelible diſgrace. To his memory, therefore, we will allow all the praiſe that is given to it by his grateful countrymen. Annual feſtivals are celebrated to his honour. Hymns are ſung to perpetuate his generous regard to the liberties of his country. "Twine around "his tomb, ye never-fading laurels; ye "nymphs and ſwains of Korea, ſcatter the "grave of this your hero with the ſweeteſt "flowrets of the ſpring; and you, ye "guardians

" guardians and protectors of your coun-
" try, resound forth his name, that his
" memory may live for ever :" thus sing the youths and maidens of Korea.

FRAGMENT XXIV.

WE have mentioned Tonquin as having formerly made a part of the extenſive dominion of China. It is now independent, and has been ſo for many centuries. To the eaſt it touches China; to the weſt it is confined by the kingdom of the Burmans; to the north again by China, and to the ſouth by the Gulph of Cochin China. The climate of Tonquin is, in general, ſerene and temperate. The whole country is interſected with rivers, the moſt ineſtimable bleſſing in the torrid zone. A conſtant verdure covers the face of the earth; ſo that SPRING, one would ſuppoſe, had eſtabliſhed here her ſeat of empire.

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We have very little ſatisfactory information relative to Tonquin; it lies out of the general track of European navigators. That which hath come to our knowledge, however, gives us reaſon to conclude that the Tonquineſe are an honeſt, and a candid nation. The people are repreſented as induſtrious; the ſoil as abundantly fruitful; and the form of government ſomewhat of the ſame complection with that of China. In one reſpect, indeed, the diſpoſition of the Tonquineſe ſeems to differ from that of the natives of China. The Tonquineſe are warlike; perſonal courage is held in high eſtimation with them. They are fond of arms; and, they ſay, they are ſo, becauſe arms enabled them to ſhake off the yoke of China, and gloriouſly to preſerve their independence.

In almoſt every country where the military profeſſion is, as neceſſity ſays it

ſhould be, the firſt in rank and conſideration, the ſoldiery are the peculiar care of the ſtate. Their pay is, or at leaſt always ſhould be, adequate to their wants; and they ſhould meet with thoſe indulgencies, to which, from the dangers and hazards they encounter, they are well entitled. But in Tonquin a very different ſyſtem is ſeen to prevail; the profeſſion of a ſoldier, though highly honourable, ſcarcely affords him means for ſubſiſtence. He is not allowed (although his country ſhould be in peace with all the world) to deſcend from the dignity of the military character; neither is he permitted (though not on duty) to engage in any kind of traffic or employment by which he might advance his fortune. This refinement of the Tonquineſe is vain-glorious and unjuſt. Thoſe who defend their country, are certainly entitled to a proper ſupport from that country; but ſhould that not be granted them, they at leaſt ſhould not

be

be prevented, when not interfering with other more important duties, from acquiring, by ſome civil occupation, a moderate proviſion for themſelves and families. Induſtry ſhould never be diſcouraged.

The King, the nobles, and the people of Tonquin, exhibit, at this day, a ſtriking repreſentation of the ſtate of ſociety in moſt European countries a very few ages ago, and of which there are ſome remains at this moment: I mean the prevalency, with all its inconveniencies, of the feudal form of government. The King, as firſt in power and ſituation, rules, in general, with abſolute authority; but the nobles control and counteract him whenever they ſee occaſion. They again, in their turn, are kept in order by the ſovereign power, while the people, ſinking under the double preſſure, naturally fall into a ſtate

of vaſſalage, degrading and pernicious to ſociety:—an ordinance of the kingdom even eſtabliſhing a three-months perſonal ſervitude to the Crown in all the inferior ſubjects of the realm, and a farther three months to the nobles: ſo that the middling ſort of people, the moſt numerous claſs of the community, have only ſix months of the year wherein they can call themſelves free and independent.

It would be uſeleſs here to enter into a diſcuſſion of this ſyſtem of government, or of the many ſimilar ſyſtems which are to be met with in the annals of the various nations of the earth. I cannot, however, refrain from remarking, that partial ſlavery, ſuch as prevails in Tonquin, bad as it is, is certainly a proof of much more civilization, than that of complete vaſſallage, which ran throughout all Europe, and which was, in ſome degree, unexploded even among Britons ſo late as the

reign

reign of Queen Elizabeth; for the year 1574 produced an order from that Princeſs for the manumiſſion of certain of her bondmen.

The Ruſſians, even to this day, adhere to perſonal and hereditary ſlavery. The peaſants of an eſtate are ſold with the eſtate itſelf, and are calculated in its valuation as the heads of black or any other cattle. What a degradation! But, alas, there are ſtill more horrid exhibitions of veſſallage to be met with among the children of the weſtern world! Why does Europe afford me the ready means of giving examples of this nature; examples which blur the face of charity and benevolence? Europe, the ſeat of kindneſs, compaſſion, and generoſity!

But ſo it is, Europe affords the means: ſhe preſents the mercileſs contracts called aſſiento; the inhuman channels whereby

avarice accumulates riches by the barter of the race of man. I am aware of the neceſſity that is pleaded for this abominable traffic; but how can I reflect on the excruciating agony which we ourſelves ſhould feel on the loſs of a ſon, daughter, friend, or brother, though even in the ordinary courſe of nature; and at the ſame time not be conſcious that the children of Africa are born with as exquiſite a degree of ſenſibility? That the bitterneſs of anguiſh can rend their ſouls as much as it can ours; and that inceſſant labour and perpetual ſlavery cannot but bend them to the earth with an exceſs of miſery, which muſt cry aloud to Heaven!

The firſt barbarous contract for this galling ſervitude of the human ſpecies, was made between France and Spain; the former engaged to drag the unhappy wretches from their native ſhores; the latter

latter to receive them annually into South America: thirty-eight thouſand males and females, during the courſe of the war which then raged in Europe; and forty-eight thouſand when peace ſhould be re-eſtabliſhed. This contract was afterwards transferred to the Engliſh by a formal treaty in the reign of Queen Anne, the firſt article of which ſtipulated, that in a certain number of years, one hundred and forty-four thouſand ſouls ſhould be tranſported to America, to replace the natural inhabitants who had met with deſtruction at the hands of their conquerors the Spaniards.

But ſlavery was not all; other evils were entailed by this aſſiento, ſuch as unhealthineſs of climate, through which theſe miſerable creatures were to paſs; unwholeſome food; the working of mines to which they were deſtined, where peſtilential damps and vapours conſtantly prevailed;

prevailed; all theſe were the conſequence of the execution of the contract, ſo that in a word, the eſtimate was made, that not one in three ſurvived the heart-rending afflictions of the year. What, what ſhall we ſay to this? Can the thought be dwelt on, and the tear not ſtart from the eye of humanity? O ſhame, that no other corner of the world can exhibit ſpectacles ſo unfeeling as the poliſhed dominions of Europe! That Europeans ſhould ſink ſo infinitely beneath what they ought to be! Europeans who boaſt ſo much of freedom and generoſity; ſo much of the attention which ſhould be paid to the laws of nature; to the laws which bind and regulate communities and ſtates!

FRAG-

FRAGMENT XXV.

OUR laſt digreſſion led us a little too far; we will now return to the people of Tonquin. The deportment of the Tonquineſe is grave, modeſt, and polite. They are humane and courteous. In general they are followers of the doctrine of Confutſee, whoſe memory, as we have already remarked, they hold in the higheſt veneration. The tranſmigration of ſouls is an eſſential article of their belief. Their whole ſyſtem of religion, indeed, is conſiderably refined, and in fact much more inculcated and better obſerved than that of the Chineſe; and that may be one efficient cauſe why the Bonzes or prieſts of Tonquin poſſeſs a character more reſpectable in itſelf, and more amply provided for, than

than that of their brethren of China. Tavernier ſays, the offerings made to the gods of Tonquin, through the medium of the clergy, eſpecially on the acceſſion of a monarch to the throne, are incredible; in one article alone, (that of animals) he tells us of an hundred thouſand which were given by a ſovereign, in order that his reign might be proſperous.

This deviation from the frugal, though prudent line, ſo ſtrictly adhered to by the Chineſe, ſhews that ſuperſtition has already made ſome progreſs in Tonquin. The days of exorbitant riches and proſperity in the prieſthood, are always remarked to be the days of bigotry and infatuation in the laity. Manſell, the domeſtic chaplain of your third Harry, poſſeſſed ſeven hundred livings at one time; and you know no period of time, nor country, nor people, ever could exhibit ſtronger ſymptoms of diſtempered imagi-

imaginations than you did at that æra, about the middle of the thirteenth century*.

* In England the clergy, increaſing in wealth, power, honour, and intereſt, began ſoon to ſet up for themſelves; and that which they obtained through favour of the civil government, they claimed as their inherent right, indefeaſible, and *jure divino:* founding their exemption on the text of ſcripture, "Touch not "mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm." Hence the comprehenſive criterion was eſtabliſhed, that every one who could *read* (a mark of great learning in thoſe days of ignorance and ſuperſtition) being accounted a clerk or *clericus*, was admitted to the *privilegium clericale*, or *benefit of clergy*. But this is no longer the caſe. We may collect from it, however, as the firſt law authorities expound, that though in ſuch times, that monſter in true policy, of a body of men reſiding in the bowels of a ſtate though independent of its laws, may for a while ſubſiſt; yet when learning and rational religion have a little enlightened the minds of men, ſociety cannot any longer endure ſo groſs an abſurdity, an abſurdity which muſt deſtroy its very fundamentals. For by the original contract of government, the price of protection by the united force of individuals, is that of obedience to the united will of the community. This united will is declared in the laws of the land; and that united force is exerted in their due and univerſal execution.

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The diſcipline of the Tonquineſe youth, and the courſe of ſtudies neceſſarily required for thoſe who aim at offices of ſtate, are nearly the ſame as thoſe among the Chineſe. Law and Phyſic, with the abſtruſer ſciences, are equally well cultivated, ſo that they in no reſpect yield the palm to their former maſters.

A plurality of wives is tolerated in Tonquin, and that under harſher circumſtances, with reſpect to the women, than even in China; for the men aſſume the privilege of repudiating their wives whenever they are weary of them, nor will they allow their wives to avail themſelves of a ſimilar prerogative. The Tonquineſe, indeed, are not ſingular in this ungenerous treatment of women; the laws of Moſes expreſsly ſpeak in favour of it. "When a man hath taken a "wife, and married her, and it come to "paſs

" paſs that ſhe find no favour in his eyes, " then let him write her a bill of di- " vorcement, and give it in her hand, " and ſend her out of his houſe." Thus we ſee the choſen of the land of Iſrael may be, if they are ſo inclined, to the full as hard-hearted and ungallant as the Tonquineſe.

Excluſive of the unlimited number of wives, admitted by the Tonquineſe cuſtom of polygamy, the moſt unbounded licenſe is likewiſe granted the men in their promiſcuous commerce with the fair ſex; whence ariſe other ſources of miſery. In ſhort, nothing can exceed the wretchedneſs of the women of Tonquin. Subject to all the tyranny and capriciouſneſs of maſters, not of huſbands; doomed to eternal confinement, ſolitude and pain; the objects of love one moment, of diſgrace at another; and compelled to ſilence and reſignation, at the infidelity of thoſe

whose affections they alone should possess, and yet they themselves adjudged, if guilty of a similar transgression, to the most horrid and ignominious death!

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XXVI.

THE Tonquineſe, who, like the people of China, delight in ſhews, have yet ſome that are, perhaps, more rational and more conducive to the welfare of ſociety, than any that are to be met with among that celebrated people. I ſhall content myſelf with mentioning one; and I ſelect it, becauſe I do not recollect it to be parallelled by any other nation. It is this: At the commencement of every year, a ſolemn feſtival is held, in a plain adjacent to the capital of Tonquin, at which the King and all the nobles of his court attend. Scattered up and down this plain are temporary altars, on which are inſcribed the names of the warriors and other great characters to whoſe memories they are dedicated. For ſeveral

ſucceſſive days, theſe altars are adorned with all the ſplendor of religious pomp, while conſtant ſacrifices are piouſly offered on them. The hour then comes when the gratitude of the people manifeſts itſelf in awfully commemorating the acts of their benefactors, their wiſdom, and their labours. This ended, the ſovereign approaches the altars with the utmoſt humility and reſpect. At each he makes a ſtand; recounts the actions of the hero or the ſtateſman who is ſuppoſed to ſleep beneath it; from former deeds draws emulative concluſions; recommends their toils as examples worthy of imitation; bleſſes their memories; and then joins in prayer and ſupplication to the gods who preſide over merit, and who reward the exertions of the patriot and the good citizen.

We now take our departure from Tonquin, and ſtop for a moment in Cochin

chin-China, ſeparated from it by a river that ſerves as the boundary of the two kingdoms. The reigning family of this country, and indeed almoſt all the nobles, are deſcendants of the Tonquineſe; but they did not eſtabliſh themſelves by conqueſt. During the times of civil diſtraction in their own country, they ſought an aſylum among the rude, but kind, aborigines of Cochin-China. The reception they met with was hoſpitable; the Cochin-Chineſe embraced them as beings of a ſuperior order; they gave them territory; they gave them power; they gave them every thing they ſtood in need of. In ſhort, in the courſe of a few years, they allowed them ſo firmly to rivet themſelves both in ſtrength and conſequence, that they readily acquired an obedience in the natives, and an approbation of ſuch form of government as they found it convenient to eſtabliſh.

Something like a natural equality took place. The democratic, with a very few checks, was determined on, as fiſhing, hunting, and agriculture, were the ſole employments of the Cochin-Chineſe. A conſiderable degree of refinement, however, having been introduced by the Tonquineſe, a taſte for ſociety gradually inſinuated itſelf into the breaſts of the rude, but honeſt, natives: hence ſprang induſtry and every ſpecies of improvement. Commerce even began to flouriſh; the neighbouring nations encouraged it; and the Cochin-Chineſe, having the means in profuſion, ſoon came into the habit and ſpirit of commercial dealings.

If we are to believe the accounts of travellers, the hoſpitality and the ſimplicity of this people ſome years ago were ſcarcely to be parallelled. No jealouſy of ſtrangers; no apprehenſion of evil deſigns from thoſe whom they were happy

happy to receive and look upon as friends. "He who comes among us, ſaid they, "and generouſly confides in our good "faith, is one whom we ſhould love, "and for whom we ſhould feel both gra- "titude and reſpect." But this ſtate, I fear, this type of the golden age, is rapid in its decline. Late navigators tell us, that a Prince, no longer a common father of his people, now reigns over the Cochin-Chineſe with all the ſplendour of an arbitrary potentate. The ſeeds of tyrannical government are univerſally ſcattered; and it is to be apprehended, from all appearance, that the time is not very diſtant, when the chearful ſunſhine of that happy liberty which they have hitherto enjoyed, ſhall be obſcured for ever.

FRAGMENT XXVII.

FROM Cochin-China, were it within the limits of our enquiry, we ſhould proceed to Cambodia, Siam, Pegu, and the coaſts of Aracan, and there dwell a little on the laws, the cuſtoms, and the religion of each people. But in fact the manners and cuſtoms of the inhabitants of theſe very extenſive regions are ſo very little known, and the anarchy in which their governments have invariably been found, hath been ſo effectually a bar to inveſtigation, that we ſhall find ourſelves under the hard neceſſity of leaving this blank to be filled up by ſome future writer on the ſubject of the Eaſt. For a moment, however, we will place ourſelves, as it were, in the center of them all. The view will be but tranſitory: it

it will, however, enable us to ſpeak of their exiſtence, and then we are free to continue our way.

The exact geographical deſcription of theſe countries is very immaterial. It may be ſufficient to remark, that from the borders of Cochin-China, they continue in a regular chain (the peninſula of Melacca excepted) to the confines of Bengal. They there meet the rocks and deſerts of Aſiatic Tartary, and there they terminate.

Similar in features, complection, and diſpoſition, the natives of theſe kingdoms appear as one and the ſame people; bold, uncivilized, and treacherous; maſters of a ſoil in the utmoſt degree fruitful, yet yielding little, from indolence and inattention; intrepid ſons of rapine, and ſlaves to every kind of tyranny and ſuperſtition. In ſhort, from what I have either

either ſeen, heard, or read of theſe people, they are utterly unworthy of notice; and yet how dreadful that it ſhould be ſo! No country in the world is more favourably ſituated, or more abundantly capable of yielding every thing for the uſe and conveniency of man. Nature there pours forth her treaſures in almoſt wanton profuſion. Thus circumſtanced, with a population, however, comparatively inconſiderable, the major parts of theſe beautiful ſhores are left uncultivated and waſte. That which ſhould be the reſidence of men, is permitted to continue the lurking place of the moſt noxious reptiles. Nay, not even Africk herſelf can produce more deſtructive animals of every ſpecies, and of every denomination.

With this imperfect glance at the coaſts of Aracan, &c. I ſhould, perhaps, conclude the ſubject; but I find myſelf unex-

unexpectedly ſtopped by the recollection of a circumſtance which the mention of theſe countries hath often brought under our diſcuſſion; a circumſtance far beyond the reach of reaſon; far beyond the comprehenſion of the deepeſt, the moſt enlightened reſearchers into the arcana of nature. I mean that rank in the animated ſyſtem of the world, in which we can place the Ouran-Outang, or man of the woods, whoſe ſpecies is ſo common throughout this diviſion of the Eaſt. I do not know how to explain to you the nature or the diſpoſition of this creature; both the one and the other amaze me. I cannot diſcriminate his propenſities, though I am greatly deſirous of doing ſo, however humiliating the knowledge might turn out, and however declarative it might be found of the individual imbecility of man.

The

The deſcription of the Ouran-Outang, as given us by an able anatomiſt, is to this effect: the Ouran-Outang, as well as all animals of the monkey claſs, are furniſhed with hands inſtead of paws; their ears, eyes, eye-lids, lips, and breaſts, are like thoſe of mankind; their internal conformation alſo bears ſome diſtant likeneſs, and they diſcover ſome faint efforts at intellectual ſagacity. The Ouran-Outang, indeed, of all others, approaches neareſt to the human race; it has been ſeen from three to ſeven feet high; it is covered with hair rather of the human than of the brute kind. The tongue, and all the organs of the voice are the ſame, and yet it wants ſpeech; the brain is formed in the ſame manner, and yet it wants reaſon. It is patient, pliant, imitative, and melancholy, as if conſcious of a fallen ſtate.

Such

Such is the Ouran-Outang, as it appears on examination. St. Jerom, indeed, differs ſomewhat in the account he gives of the man of the woods. "St. Anthony," ſays he, "a hermit, once "travelling through the deſerts of Egypt, "eſpied a Satyr approaching towards him; "or a little man, with goats feet, a "crooked noſe, and a forehead armed "with horns, and being aſked by St. "Anthony what he was, gave this anſwer: I am a mortal, and one of thoſe "inhabitants of the deſert whom the "deluded Gentiles worſhip, under the "names of Fauns, Satyrs, and Incubi, "and am now deputed as ambaſſador to "beg your prayers and interceſſions for "us." Now, whether, with St. Jerom, (but St. Jerom, I believe, was no naturaliſt) we may credit the ſtory of this holy anchorite, or whether it be more conſonant to ſound ſenſe, to concur in the received opinion, that all men of the woods are animals

animals of a diſtinct ſpecies, I will not pretend to ſay. I have already declared myſelf unequal to the deciſion.

That inviſible chain which links all animated nature; that inſcrutable deſtiny which forms, combines, and exiſts perhaps in maſſes, the moſt inert to our perceptions; that all-ſeeing Providence which watches over all, that, and that alone, can diſcern where one ſpecies ends, and where another is to begin. When in the ſearch of knowledge, man obſerves the claſs of zoophytes or vegetable nature, that theſe inſects have life, motion, and yet can be propagated by diſſection: when he ſees the amphibious tribes of animals, the cetaceous claſs of fiſhes, ſuch as the whale, who with the internal conformation of a quadruped, has warm red blood which circulates; parts of generation ſimilar to thoſe of a terrene animal, and lungs which compel it to emerge for the

the freedom of reſpiration. When man ſees this, and when he likewiſe can diſcover that even plants have a circulation of juices, through veſſels as nicely and carefully diſpoſed, as thoſe of many of the ſtationary objects which are claſſed as animate; and that when deprived of the active principle of nature, a free and liberal ſupply of air, theſe very plants ſicken, droop, and periſh, as we ſhould ourſelves in a ſimilar ſituation: when theſe, with a vaſt variety of other ſuch phœnomena, are daily open to our contemplation, where are we to ſtop, or on what are we to determine?

Human curioſity, indeed, is great; but human curioſity never can be ſatisfied. We would know all things, and yet how ignorant are we of even the commoneſt properties of nature! The cauſes which impel one body to act upon another, which fix on the mind thoſe impreſſions from

from the external appearance of things, which we call thought, and which ultimately producing will, excites corporeal motion: of these we are entirely ignorant. How becoming, therefore, would it be to drop the pride of arrogant assumption, and hypothetical singularity! The little knowledge we have should teach us to be modest.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XXVIII.

IN a former fragment, I ſlightly touched upon the ſeveral general diſtinctions of the human ſpecies. I then aſſerted, that the ſcale was in ſome degree defective; and I am warranted in ſuch aſſertion, from the accounts which have been given us of ſome late diſcoveries. It is extraordinary, and not very flattering to human pride, that the chain may be fancifully traced, from man in his perfect ſtate, to man in a fallen ſituation, ſuch as that of the Ouran-Outang may be imagined to be, and which we have juſt mentioned. I ſay fancifully traced, for I would not wiſh to be underſtood as believing, that monkies and men are of the ſame ſpecies. The gradation, however, is curious; we run them cloſe, and cloſer indeed than many a fine gentleman

would wiſh, if a fine gentleman could prevail upon himſelf to reaſon on ſo frightful a ſubject.

It is not an eaſy matter to determine, on that people who approach neareſt to the chattering generation. Mallicollo, Tanna, and New Caledonia in the South Seas, afford, I believe, the moſt ſtriking proofs of an affinity. In theſe countries, we are told, the natives are extraordinarily hairy all over their body, the back not excepted: their ſkulls likewiſe, we are informed, are of a ſingular conformation; the forehead from the beginning of the noſe, together with the reſt of the head, being much depreſſed and inclining backward; in ſhort, that the appearance of the whole frame, the very look and countenance, are apiſh, and ſtrongly expreſſive of a family reſemblance.

Theſe

Theſe, indeed, are not the only people who may be thought akin to the monkey tribe; they are ſufficient, however, for our preſent purpoſe, eſpecially as in their configuration, they have as determinate traits of relationſhip as the Quojas Morros of Africa, of whom we have the following deſcription: one of theſe animals was formerly brought over from Congo to Holland, and preſented to Frederick Henry, then Prince of Orange. It was about as tall as a child three years old, moderately corpulent, but ſquare built, and well proportioned; the fore part of the body without hair, and all the back part covered with hair of a black colour. At firſt ſight, its face reſembled that of a man, but its noſe was flat and ſnubbed; its ears were like thoſe of the human ſpecies; its breaſts, for it was a female, were full, its navel was indented, its ſhoulders well hung, its hands divided into fingers and thumbs, and the calves

of its legs and its heels plump and fleſhy. She walked erect, and could raiſe and carry burdens not over heavy.

But the animals of all others the moſt extraordinary, are the Albinoes of Africa; and the diminutive race that was diſcovered by the Spaniards under Vaſco Nugnez de Balboa on the Iſthmus of Darien. The accounts of them, as collected from travellers and naturaliſts, are thus given by two very elegant and very profound hiſtorians: the Albinoes, according to M. de Voltaire, are a very inconſiderable nation who inhabit the interior parts of Africa. "Their weakneſs," ſays he, "does not allow them to make "excurſions far from the caverns which "they inhabit. The negroes, nevertheleſs, catch ſome of them at times, "and theſe we purchaſe as curioſities. I have ſeen two of them; a "thouſand Europeans have ſeen ſome.

"To

" To ſay that they are dwarf negroes,
" whoſe ſkin has been blanched by a
" kind of leproſy, is like ſaying, that the
" blacks themſelves are whites blackened
" by the leproſy. An Albinoe no more
" reſembles a Guinea negroe, than he
" does an Engliſhman or a Spaniard.
" Their whiteneſs is not like ours, it
" does not appear like fleſh, it has no
" mixture of white and brown, it is the
" colour of linen or rather of bleached
" wax; their hair and eye-brows are like
" the fineſt and ſofteſt ſilk; their eyes
" have no ſort of ſimilitude with thoſe
" of other men, but are very like part-
" ridges' eyes. Their ſhape reſembles
" that of the Laplanders; but their
" head that of no other nation what-
" ever, as their hair, eyes, and ears,
" are all different; and they ſeem to have
" nothing that belongs to man but the
" ſtature of their bodies, with the fa-

" culty of ſpeaking and thinking, but in " a degree very different from ours."

This deſcription of the Albinoes, from the animated pen of Voltaire, we will follow with that of the diminitive race in Darien, as given us by Dr. Robertſon in his Hiſtory of the Southern Continent of America: " Lionel Wafer," ſays this elegant writer, " a traveller poſſeſſed of " more curioſity and intelligence than " we ſhould have expected in an aſſociate " of buccaneers. This man diſcovered " in the Iſthmus of Darien, a ſmall, but " ſingular, race of people: they are of " low ſtature, according to his deſcrip- " tion, of a feeble make, and incapable " of enduring fatigue; their colour is a " dead milk white, not reſembling that " of a fair people among Europeans, but " without any tincture of a bluſh or " ſanguine complection. Their ſkin is " covered with a fine hairy down of a " chalky

" chalky white; the hair of their head,
" their eye-brows, and eye-laſhes, are
" of the ſame hue; their eyes of a ſin-
" gular form, ſo that they can hardly
" bear the light of the ſun, but they
" ſee clearly by moon-light, and are
" moſt active and gay in the night. No
" race ſimilar to this has been diſcovered
" in any other part of America. Cor-
" tes, indeed, found ſome people exactly
" reſembling the white people of Darien,
" among the rare and monſtrous animals
" which Montezuma had collected."

In laying thus before you a minute deſcription of each of theſe extraordinary people, if we may call them people, I have meant nothing more than merely to ſhew you, in palpable inſtances, and thoſe from different countries, " that there is " more in this world than is dreamt of " in our philoſophy;" and that it is im-

poſſible arbitrarily to decide where the one ſpecies terminates, and where the other commences: all is inſcrutable to the ignorant and imperfect perceptions of man.

There are authors, indeed, of great ability, and Voltaire you may perceive is one, who, without the ſmalleſt heſitation, admit both the Albinoes and Dariens to be of the human race; and that even the Ouran-Outang is of the ſame family, though in a greater degree of degeneration. But theſe poſitions are warmly combated; orthodox writers admit not of ſuch unhallowed doctrine: nothing is allowed by them that will not tend to eſtabliſh the diſtinct pre-eminence and dignity of our nature.

That there is an extraordinary ſimilitude of parts between the ſocial being and

and the man of the woods, is moſt certain. The great difference is in the ſuppoſed ſtupidity of the latter, and its unacquaintance with the powers of ſpeech; but I know not, I confeſs, how far this manner of reaſoning will hold good. Speech may or may not be natural to man; this, however, is clear, ſpeech is acquired by imitation. May it not be conjectured, therefore, in the true ſpirit of Pyrrhoniſm, that from the efforts of ſociety, and from the wonderful capacity of the mind for receiving knowledge and improvement, that man has exalted himſelf far above what he was originally from nature; and that his ſuperiority over the other branches of the doubtful ſpecies, is ſolely the reſult of culture and experience? I am ſure a conjecture of this nature, and I cry your mercy, gentlemen, for ſaying it, is much more rational than that of Des Cartes, who

ſtiles

ſtiles the whole claſs of animals which approximate ſo cloſely to the human, nothing better than Automatons; nothing more than machines.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XXIX.

FROM the unpleaſing train of thought into which the laſt eſſay may have thrown you, I now gladly ſolicit your attention to a ſubject of eaſier comprehenſion: the contemplation of a numerous people, a people whoſe country hath been indifferently explored, but whoſe manners have been depreciated with prejudice and ill humour; in a word, they have not been obſerved with that candour which every nation is entitled to. A great body ſhould always be ſtudied with the kindeſt allowance; for the variety of character to be met with in it, the tempers, the diſpoſitions, the habits of millions, are not to be underſtood from the conduct or the extravagancies of a few.

The

The country of Malayo extends over the greateſt part of the peninſula which goes under that deſignation: it is ſingularly beautiful, clad in an eternal ſpring, and though ſituated under, and immediately in the neighbourhood of the equator, is yet ſo regularly bleſſed with morning and evening ſhowers, "that "the little hills rejoice on every ſide, "and the vallies ſhout for joy." Excluſive of this conſiderable dominion on the continent, the Malays alſo poſſeſs the greateſt number of thoſe iſlands that are ſcattered over the eaſtern ſeas of Aſia.

The religion of the Malays is in common Mohammedan; it crept in among them ſhortly after the firſt diſciples of the Koran had eſtabliſhed themſelves in India. With the faith of the Mohammedans, however, the Malays did not imbibe the principles of their government; they ſtill adhered to their eſtabliſhed

liſhed ſyſtem, the feudal tenure; and that tenure is, to this day, the prevailing form of legiſlature among them. They improve, indeed, on what was once the cuſtom of Europeans; they admit of no villanage or perſonal ſlavery.

The uſual epithet beſtowed upon the Malays (though very unjuſtly) is that of ſavage; they rather appear to me a civilized people. Their houſes, it is true, are built in general with cane and rattan; and it is likewiſe true, that they are neither ſumptuous nor gaudy in their dreſs or appearance; but this ſeems to me nothing more than the conſequence of a fine climate, and of an univerſal inclination to poſſeſs the comforts and the conveniencies of life with as much ſimplicity, and with as little trouble as poſſible. But there are not wanting inſtances of ſeveral well-built towns, and of conſiderable ſymptoms of refinement among them.

The

The city of Achin ſtill ſhews that it was a place of ſome importance long before Europeans had diſcovered a paſſage to the Eaſt.

The ſureſt means of acquiring improvement in the great buſineſs of ſociety is, we are told, by commerce; this is an undoubted fact. Admitted, therefore, in its ordinary extent, the Malays have had every opportunity of reaping that ſort of knowledge which, it is ſuppoſed, can alone ſoften and humanize the mind. With the Hindoos and the Chineſe, the oldeſt civilized nations with which we are acquainted, they have had a trade from the earlieſt periods of time; and why ſhould they not be allowed to have profited themſelves of theſe opportunities? To aſſert that they have not, is to aſſert arbitrarily, and without proof. But that which to my mind ſets their improvement beyond the poſſibility of doubt is, that

that in all commercial tranſactions, a ſcrupulous honeſty is found to be their ruling principle; and they are unſuſpicious in the higheſt degree. From the foreign merchant, whom they never ſaw before, they will purchaſe ſuch commodities as they want, on the bare credit of his word; and though unacquainted with the ſcientific law of nations, and ſo ſituated as to be debarred all hope of reparation ſhould fraud be practiſed on them, they yet, in the exceſs of good faith, are never apprehenſive of any ſiniſter deſign; nor can they admit the idea that they themſelves are to be ſuſpected.

This fair character, I know, will be denied the Malays; I am ſorry for it; but I am free to ſay, I think they are entitled to it. Proofs, in repeated inſtances, have come within my own knowledge, of the reliance they have on the honour of ſtrangers; and the univerſal depen-

dence which is placed on their honeſty in the purchaſe of thoſe bags of gold duſt which they annually ſend from their coaſts, and which are never either inſepected or aſſayed, is evidence ſufficient that they are to be truſted. In fact, in this very valuable article in which the people of Hindoſtan deal conſiderably, I never heard of any unfair practice. The intrinſic value of the duſt is always found ſuch as it is declared to be.

While we are on this ſubject, it may not be out of the way to remark, that the greateſt quantity of gold duſt imported into India, is from Achin, above mentioned, ſituated on the north-weſt extremity of the iſland of Sumatra. This place has long attracted the attention of the curious; but whether it be the Ophir of Solomon, as is contended, is difficult to determine: "and they came "to Ophir and fetched from thence, "gold,

" gold, four hundred and twenty talents, " and brought it to King Solomon." The name of a mountain immediately in ſight of the harbour of Achin, and down whoſe ſides the chief part of the gold that is collected, is waſhed, is moſt certainly Ophir, at leaſt the natives call it ſo; but whether they learnt the word Ophir from the Tyrians or the Europeans, who reſided formerly among them, or whether it be the proper name of the mountain, I will not take upon me to determine. It is ſufficient, I think, for us to know, in ſupport of its being the ſcripture Ophir, that the voyage might have been made by Solomon's ſhips.

During one part of the year, the ſouth weſt winds blow invariably down the Arabian Gulph; and during the other, the north eaſt winds prevail. With the firſt of theſe, therefore, the royal ſhips or prows, or whatever they were, had it

in their power, with eaſe, to reach Achin in two or three months; and with the latter, to return in as inconſiderable a ſpace of time. Camoens, one of the firſt Portugueſe navigators to the Eaſt, ſeems ſtrongly to favour this opinion in his beautiful poem of the Luſiad, and as his authority cannot be conſidered as an indifferent one, I have a pleaſure in adducing it.

"To this fair iſle, the golden Cherſoneſe,
"Some deem the Sapient monarch, plow'd the ſeas,
"Ophir its Tyrian name."

LUSIAD.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XXX.

IN the interior parts of ſome of the principal Malay iſlands, a ſingular people, I am told, have been diſcovered, who are different in figure, language, and cuſtoms, not only from the Malays themſelves, but from every other nation of the Eaſt. Theſe are probably the Aborigines; a future day may poſſibly bring to light ſomething ſatisfactory on this ſubject, at preſent, from want of information, I am neceſſarily obliged to confine myſelf to the inhabitants of the coaſts.

The language of the Malays is wonderfully harmonious, abounding in the ſofteſt and moſt liquid ſounds; the Italian, perhaps, is not ſuperior to it. Tavernier

ſays it was diffuſed, in his time, throughout the whole peninſula of Malay, even to the dominions of the Grand Mogul; and that it was ſtudied for its beauty and copiouſneſs, infinitely more than Greek and Latin by Europeans in the weſtern hemiſphere. It is extraordinary, however, that this fine language, and one ſo greatly admired, ſhould be without an arbitrary character for its expreſſion. The characters uſed by the Malays, in writing, are chiefly Arabic, and the mode in which they write is exactly the ſame, from right to left.

It is a known and a juſt obſervation, that a people in a ſtate of freedom and independency, are peculiarly addicted to poetic compoſitions; and the reaſon is evident, paſſion, ſentiment, and fine feelings, are the growth of liberty, and all theſe have naturally the power of producing the moſt forcible expreſſions, and the

the moſt lively imagery. The warrior and the lover ſeldom ſpeak but in animated and well-meaſured numbers.

But poetry without muſic, when the ear alone is to be relied on, can never have the certainty of not being forgotten; rude attempts, therefore, have always been made in the infancy of poetry, to draw in the aſſiſtance of harmony and muſic. In the ſtate of freedom and independency, therefore, in which I have repreſented the Malays, and poſſeſſed of a language the child of harmony itſelf, it cannot be doubted but that both their metre and muſic are pleaſing and full of fire. The fact is, they are ſo; no European people have a greater variety of ſtrains, almoſt all of them pleaſing, than the Malays. Scientifically, indeed, they do not underſtand the principles of muſic; but from the delicacy of their ear, and their aptitude at learning theſe prin-

ciples when they leave their own country, they ſhew, demonſtratively, that they have made a conſiderable progreſs in the knowledge of the natural, though wild and irregular, properties of ſound.

The Malays are in common of an inferior ſize to Europeans, as indeed are all the inhabitants of the torrid zone. They are of a reddiſh yellow colour, with a profuſion of long ſtrait hair, which they in general cut for the conveniency of wearing on the crown of the head a ſmall Arabic cap. The women are in ſize proportioned to the men; they braid their hair in pretty fancied forms. In the more conſiderable towns, both women and men not only dreſs with decency, but many of them with taſte and elegance. Taken altogether, however, their appearance is not very agreeable to an European, eſpecially that of the lower ſort of women,

women, who diſtend their ears to a frightful ſize by means of elaſtic reeds, which conſtantly keep enlarging the orifice of the ear into which they are at firſt put, until it almoſt touches the ſhoulder: an outré vanity, it muſt be confeſſed; but vanity is not confined—it is the produce of every ſoil; and is only outré as the circumſtances which gave it riſe are unknown, or riſe in contradiction to what is deemed right by local and prejudiced impreſſion.

An immoderate love of play is evidently a ſtriking feature in the character of this people; nay, to ſuch exceſſes do they carry it, that like the Germans, as we are told by Tacitus, they venture their liberties, and every thing that is dear to them, on the caſt of a die. "He "that loſes, voluntarily becomes the ſlave "of the winner." Firſt goes the property;

perty; next the wife and children, and laſtly the wretch himſelf.

It is not incurious to reflect on this diſpoſition for gaming; nor is it unworthy of attention to obſerve, how ſtrongly the ſame propenſity operates among all men: with the Malay or the American, for inſtance, in his native woods; and with the European ſurrounded with luxury and refinement. Indolence and want of employment, are manifeſtly the cauſes which firſt impel the mind to ſeek gratification in this inordinate, this ruinous paſſion. Could a man force himſelf to induſtrious applications, the ſpirit of play would ſoon evaporate; but ſome, as among Europeans, are placed above the neceſſity of labour; and others, as among the Malays and Americans, deſpiſe it. Hence univerſally ariſes that *ennui*, that liſtleſſneſs, that indifference to every purſuit but that of chance, when the mind

mind agitated, and every generous feeling of the ſoul abſorbed, the man at length becomes totally involved in all the mazes of uncertainty, in all the heart-rending diſtractions of apprehenſion.

The Malays, though ſomewhat ferocious in their look, are yet, as I have already ſaid, courteous and affable to ſtrangers; and whatever may be ſaid to the contrary, they aſſuredly are conſiderably more advanced in the principles of civilization, than were the inhabitants of moſt parts of your now charming Europe a very few centuries ago. That we read of their frantic extravagance at Batavia and other places belonging to the Dutch, is certain; but to which ſide are we to attribute the cauſes of thoſe horrid lengths to which they have been ſeen to carry their reſentment? Are they to be looked for in the original texture of his ſoul,

ſoul, that the Malay, reduced to madneſs and deſpair, with his hair diſhevelled, his body anointed with oil, and a poignard in each hand, ſhall fly at a friend or foe indiſcriminately; murder attending every blow, while he, as a common enemy to mankind, is purſued, ſhot at, and cut, till he is ultimately deſtroyed? Or is it to be accounted for, in the haughty ſupremacy aſſumed, and rigorouſly, nay barbarouſly exerciſed, by a cruel taſk-maſter, over a free and independent being, breathing his own native air, and treading on the ſoil heretofore the property of his fathers?

Humanity would here wiſh that the obloquy could fall on the people the leaſt connected with us; but the voice of truth is too loud to be ſuppreſſed. The madneſs of the Malays, the madneſs, I mean, which is premeditately raiſed by opium, is generally well known to be the reſult of

of injury and harſh uſage: they are driven to madneſs, and they deal round deſtruction without mercy.

"——If you prick us do we not bleed? If you tickle us "do we not laugh? And if you wrong us, ſhall we not "revenge? If we are like you in the reſt, we will re- "ſemble you in that. What you teach us we will exe- "cute; and it ſhall go hard but we will better the in- "ſtruction."

SHAKESPEARE.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XXXI.

I CANNOT conclude the ſubject of the Malays, without taking notice of a late diſcovery made among the inhabitants of the interior parts of certain of the iſlands of Malayo, namely, that of their devouring ſuch priſoners as fall into their hands in war; a cuſtom ſtained with the deepeſt tinge of barbariſm and inhumanity, and which for the honour of man, I hoped, had been exploded in every country where the ſmalleſt traces of civilization could be diſcerned. But the fact, I am afraid, is beyond the poſſibility of doubt; it comes to us with too many marks of authenticity to be diſbelieved.

The Malays, in this inſtance of ſavage ferocity, in a great degree deſcend from that

that character which I am desirous you should think they really possess; but, incompatible as such ferocity may appear with refinement, there yet have been other nations, probably, as much improved in the principles of society as the Malays, who have been found to devour such unhappy persons as have fallen to them in captivity. The custom, we know, was universal in the Mexican dominion, when first discovered by the Spaniards; nor is it difficult to trace it likewise to the no less civilized Peruvians.

Barbarous, however, as this practice must indisputably be held, it still is nearly parallelled by an infinitely more celebrated people than either the Americans or the Malays; a people whom we are taught to look upon as gods. The Romans allowed of torture, and even of death, to be inflicted on prisoners taken in war. They did not, indeed, like the Iroquois, say to each

each other, "Come, let us go, and eat "such and such nations." The principle, however, was to the full as bad. In cold blood to deſtroy a brave, an honourable character, for nobly fighting for his country, was not, in the ſmalleſt degree, leſs atrocious, than the devouring him in revenge; for revenge muſt be conſidered as the firſt, and the ruling paſſion of the cannibal.

It will not be found to redound at all to the credit of human nature, when the univerſality of this practice comes to be looked into. Scarcely any country in the world but has had its æra of man-eating. The old world had tradition of various nations addicted to the uſe of human fleſh; the new, in which we are all included, has afforded repeated inſtances of the like depravity.—America, almoſt from one end of its vaſt continent to the

the other, and all the various iſlands which have lately been diſcovered in the ſouthern hemiſphere.

Man, neither from inſtinct, nor from the paſſion of hunger, could ever have been driven, while herding with his fellow creatures, to the neceſſity of eating human fleſh. The extremity of want, in certain caſes, hath indeed reduced ſome unhappy ſufferers to the dreadful alternative of either doing ſo or ſtarving; but the inſtances have been few, and diſtraction or madneſs hath generally preceded ſuch bloody acts. The accounts, therefore, that we have both in ancient and modern writers of whole nations who have taken human fleſh as their common, as their general food, cannot but be exaggerated; travellers have been miſtaken. They have branded thoſe with the unqualified name of Anthropophagi, who have

have done nothing more, perhaps, " than " boil and eat the broth of their ene- " mies."

Were any people profeſſedly cannibals, one would ſuppoſe the moſt ſouthern inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego to be ſo, who are the moſt miſerable of all human beings; and who not having proviſion, ſuch as is procurable in other countries, are compelled to feed on raw ſeals' fleſh, and that frequently in its moſt putrid ſtate. And yet the inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego are not cannibals, either from neceſſity or from revenge; but, indeed, that which puts the impoſſibility of it beyond a doubt is, the forbearance always ſhewn when the weaker ſex or when children are brought into captivity. It has rarely happened that women or children have ſuffered: the fierce barbarian thirſts for the blood of none but him who

who ſtimulates his ardour, and who oppoſes him in the field.

When we conſider the cannibal, therefore, as actuated ſolely by the ſpirit of revenge, we ſhall not ſo readily ſubſcribe to the opinion, that the eating of human fleſh neceſſarily implies a total privation of every benevolent affection; neither ſhall we any longer wonder at it, among men but moderately civilized, when the page of European hiſtory can almoſt match it in barbarity. I refer to the ſixteenth century, a century which exhibited many of the moſt bloody tragedies. No one, however, more diabolically inhuman than the carnage at the memorable ſiege of Malta: at a ſtorm of a fortreſs on that iſland by the Turks, all ſuch of the garriſon as were found alive when it fell into the enemy's hands, had their bellies ript up, and their hearts torn out,

while the adverſe party, in the fury of dreadful retaliation, maſſacred all the Mohammedans they could lay hold of, and ſevering their heads from their bodies, fired them, inſtead of ſhot, into the camp of their friends.

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